



CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SOUTHERN MISSOURI

OCTOBER 2023



DINNER FOR LIFE 2023: A RECORD-BREAKING SUCCESS

You broke records! Dinner for Life 2023 was the most successful yet – \$308,126.01 was raised for LifeHouse Crisis Maternity Home. With dueling pianos, a cake parade, a 10th Birthday celebration and more, a great time was had by all!

A special thank you to the Dinner for Life Committee and volunteers for all their hard work and dedication to the event. We could not have done this without your help!

We also want to recognize the anonymous donor who made the matching gift! Thank you to all of our sponsors and donors who contributed to the event's success. We were truly blessed with an outstanding night of fundraising for LifeHouse. We hope you'll join us next year for Dinner for Life on September 21, 2024!

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KEN'S COLUMN

There are many great works ongoing among the ministries of Catholic Charities! Our teams are engaged across the Diocese, reaching out west to east to provide hope and, ultimately, change lives. Our mission and vision hold us true to who we are and who we serve. We could not reach either without support from you through your prayerful giving.

Charitable giving to Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri is of great importance for several reasons. Your donation reflects the values and principles of our faith and directly impacts the well-being of individuals and communities, possibly your neighbors or fellow parishioners.

Your donation helps to continue our services while acknowledging our principles of social justice, solidarity, and the preferential option for the poor. Giving to Catholic Charities is a way for Catholics and others to live out these principles by helping those in need and vulnerable, putting your faith into action through reflecting the teachings of Jesus to love one's neighbor and care for the least among us.

Your donation will have wide-reaching impacts, from supporting veterans and their families, guiding those about to experience homelessness, responding to victims of disasters, assisting the disabled, or providing a home to homeless pregnant women. We serve everyone because we are Catholic!

Our faith places a strong emphasis on compassion and mercy. As a donor to Catholic Charities, your compassion is extended to those who are suffering, offering help, hope, and assistance to individuals and families facing difficult circumstances. With your support, we strengthen families, promote self-sufficiency, and foster a sense of belonging among those we serve.

As you consider giving to our ministry, I invite you to email me with any questions about our agency at AskTheCEO@ccsomo.org. I am happy to share more about what we do and how we do it!

Peace, Love & Courage!



UPCOMING EVENTS

BISHOP'S COLLECTION FOR CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SOUTHERN MISSOURI

November 18-19, 2023

Diocesan-wide collection.
Stay tuned for more information
from your parishes.

Make a gift at ccsomo.org.

WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

November 19, 2023

A day to recognize the importance
of the fight against poverty. Please
give prayerful consideration to a
donation to Bishop's Collection.

GIVING TUESDAY

November 28, 2023

Consider a gift to Catholic
Charities of Southern Missouri in
honor of Giving Tuesday this year.

LIFEHOUSE IN CAPE GRAND OPENING

April 19-20, 2024

Join us to celebrate the opening of
LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau! Grand
opening events will include a public open
house on Saturday, April 20 from 2-4 pm.

More details to follow closer to date.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS GOLF TOURNAMENT

April 29, 2024

Join us for a round of golf at
Fremont Hills Country Club (Nixa,
MO) to support CCSOMO. It's never
too early to start thinking about
sponsorships or teams!



THE BISHOP'S COLLECTION

for Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri



The Bishop's Collection is the annual appeal for Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri. Each year, this collection takes place in commemoration of World Day of the Poor.

In his message for World Day of the Poor 2023, Pope Francis urges, "It is easy to delegate charity to others, yet the calling of every Christian is to become personally involved."

There has never been a better time to become personally involved in Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri. Your donation enables us to provide compassionate social services to the most vulnerable populations across the southern half of our state. ***Your donation changes lives.***

As we grow closer to the weekend of Bishop's Collection, we ask that you prayerfully consider a donation to support **ALL** of the programs and **ALL** of the clients served by CCSOMO. See below for ways to give. One-time and monthly donation options are available. Would you consider a gift of \$25 a month for Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri? A monthly gift from your family to Catholic Charities will make a difference for all of our programs.

WAYS TO GIVE



Envelope in this
newsletter.



Scan the QR code with
your phone to make a
donation online.



At Mass on
November 18-19.



A WORD FROM BISHOP RICE

The weekend before Thanksgiving, we have an opportunity to come together as a Catholic community to put our faith into action through the annual **Bishop's Collection for Catholic Charities, November 18-19.**

As Bishop, I am proud of the work Catholic Charities provides in the name of all Catholics across southern Missouri. As we look to Thanksgiving and the time we will spend in our homes filled with good food, family and friends, let us recall our many gifts and blessings. Then sacrificially and prayerfully make your gift to Catholic Charities.



A HAPPY HOMECOMING

On Saturday, October 14, LifeHouse hosted a reunion for current and former staff and residents. Attendees gathered with their children to celebrate 10 years of LifeHouse in Springfield.

"TODAY IS ALL ABOUT THE KIDS BORN OVER THE YEARS TO FAMILIES AT LIFEHOUSE."

- CINDI KOPEL, CHIEF PROGRAMS OFFICER

Since opening in 2013, LifeHouse has served 216 women. 132 healthy babies have been born over that span. That's more than one baby a month!



LIFEHOUSE IN CAPE: CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Progress on LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau is moving quickly! The framing is complete, and brick work has begun on the administrative wing. HVAC has been installed above the ceiling, and sheet rock and insulation are being hung. The building is almost entirely under roof. RIHC Contractors remain on pace to complete construction by the end of January 2024.

CCSOMO will gain occupancy of the building in February 2024. Furniture, fixtures, and equipment will be added and staff will be hired throughout February and March. Cape Girardeau LifeHouse staff will have their onboarding and orientation in late March. A ribbon cutting and open house are scheduled for April 19-20, 2024.

Residents will be admitted starting April 1, 2024. The new campus will house 15 residents as well as LifeHouse and CCSOMO administrative staff. Over the last few weeks, Bishop Rice, staff members, and volunteers visited the construction site to write blessings and Bible verses on the inside of the walls. Although the words won't be visible, they will serve as hidden reminders of God's love.

A huge thank you to the donors who helped bring LifeHouse to southeast Missouri!

THE PHYSICAL HAND OF GOD:

A CCSOMO CLIENT SHARES HER STORY

This is our story of how we came to meet, cherish, love and be eternally grateful to our dear friends at Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri.

Life is wonderful, beautiful, sad, and humbling at times. We were never promised an easy road, but God promises that He will always make a way, and our experience with your organization is tangible proof of His love and graciousness in times of turmoil and agony.

My husband and I have always worked hard and taken care of our family. In 2022, my husband's health was starting to decline, so we resorted to working rideshare and delivery jobs for the flexibility it provided, allowing us to go to his doctor's appointments. One day while making a delivery, I fell and broke my shoulder. I went to the ER, and they thought it was dislocated, so they redacted it, but in doing so, they ripped out my nerves from my neck to hand in my right arm.

This was and still is extremely painful. I have had multiple surgeries since then, and I was told that I "might" regain the use in 1-2 years. This was and still is devastating, but that was just the beginning...

In March, my husband's father's health was declining rapidly due to several battles with cancer. His mother was disabled and unable to care for him. We took the last of our money and bought him a flight to California to care for his father. He worked very hard caring for his parents and ignored his own well-being. After a month of being there, he went to the hospital in terrible pain and was diagnosed with a blood clot on the arterial vein leaving his liver. I saved for two weeks and flew out to drive him home. Two weeks after that, we were back in the ER. After many tests and scans, my husband was diagnosed with liver cancer.

In less than two months, we found ourselves in a dire situation that we never, ever expected. We were both physically unable to work. This was terrifying! I had never been out of work once in all of my life. All we now owned was a 2005 Ford truck. What were we going to do? My only source of income was \$116 a week, provided by Doordash, as compensation.

I scoured the internet trying desperately to find us housing. I couldn't even afford to pay for a campground and still be able to put gas in the car to drive to his doctor's appointments (which were in Bolivar, Springfield and St Louis). In June of 2023 we were unable to pay our rent and resorted to staying in our truck, while still searching for a place to stay. It was very hot and quickly became a horrifying state of being.

I located an organization called One Door that helps the homeless and went there to see if they could assist us. It was surreal standing in line with so many homeless individuals. How did we get to this point? In such a short period of time? It was all very humbling. While in line, I was looking online and came across your organization - Catholic Charities. While speaking with the representative at One Door, options like separate homeless shelters were discussed. I was so worried - my husband was very sick, and I couldn't leave his side. We left our situation in God's hands. There was literally nothing else we could do.

I filled out an application, and a CCSOMO staff member reached out to us the very next day and told us that we qualified for a brand new program! It was like God created a program just for us! We couldn't believe it! That very day, Michelle (CCSOMO case manager) called us with a confirmation number for a hotel. She told us to go check in and get settled. That was so very nice - to be treated with dignity - allowing us to check in, and get cleaned up before meeting. This was the beginning of a wonderful relationship that we still always treasure!

Michelle is the **literal, physical hand of God, in our lives**. She is always so very kind and caring, and we are, and forever will be, grateful to her kind and generous heart. She brings us groceries and always asks us if we need anything. We speak to her nearly every day and see her multiple times a week.

Catholic Charities has provided us shelter, food and God's love. Catholic Charities and their staff have changed our lives and we are forever grateful!



- AMY AND JAMES, CCSOMO HOUSING CLIENTS



PROGRAMS

Construction Services

Developmental Disability
Services

Disaster Services

Housing Services

Maternal & Family Programs

Veterans Services

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

LIFEHOUSE TRANSPORT NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Imagine yourself pregnant or the mother of a newborn baby with no way to get to your doctor's appointments. LifeHouse is currently home to 16 women, but only five have vehicles, and they must go to work, daycare, doctor's appointments, school, etc. While they learn the bus system, it's rarely a good option. That's where volunteers become our most valuable asset.

From volunteer LaShae, "It is a real privilege to be a part of LifeHouse and assist the young ladies as they strive toward a better life for themselves and their children. I enjoy transporting them to their various appointments, as it allows me to make a personal connection and, hopefully, provide encouragement on their journey toward independence. Coincidentally, working with "my girls" has given me a renewed sense of purpose and nourished my life since my retirement. It has been the perfect next chapter!"

Being a transport volunteer is simple, fulfilling, and vital to this ministry. With 16 mothers, 11 babies, and a handful toddlers, we need more team members. When LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau opens next spring, we will need transportation volunteers to serve the women and children in southeast Missouri as well.



**To become a volunteer, please contact Jill Guise.
417-720-4213**



STAY CONNECTED!



Scan with your phone
camera for more
information about
CCSOMO, our programs,
& how to get involved.



417-720-4213 | ccsomo.org