



CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SOUTHERN MISSOURI

DECEMBER 2023

may the God of
HOPE
fill you with

JOY & PEACE

ROMANS 15:13

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES!

2023 was a year of great change for Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri! We welcomed a new CEO, introduced new events, broke ground on Mountaintop Homes, set records at Dinner for Life, and launched a new website.

2024 looks to be just as exciting! LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau will officially open its doors in April, and a new dinner gala is coming to Cape Girardeau in November. We are so excited to see where the next year takes us.

During this holiday season, we are especially thankful for your dedicated support of our mission. Our life-changing services truly would not be possible without your generosity. From everyone at Catholic Charities, thank you! We hope your Christmas season is joyful and blessed.

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KEN'S COLUMN

As the new year approaches, it's important to continue prayerful consideration for year-end donations to Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri.

Your donation allows our Catholic Charities' teams their continuing opportunities to serve the vulnerable and in need. Everyone deserves the opportunity to seek assistance when life's challenges arise. Catholic Charities' client and family focused, wraparound services include:

- Assisting those experiencing homelessness or at risk of losing their home
- Guiding our veterans through housing and employment challenges
- Supporting those impacted by disasters, not just when a crisis strikes, but long after
- Building parenting skills for new moms and dads
- Facilitating home improvements for low-income families
- Connecting the developmentally disabled with needed resources

Each of these descriptions begins with a verb, defining the action we take and driven by our love in serving others. Where it really begins is our being Catholic, and our focus on the dignity of serving those in need, no matter their faith. As a supporter of Catholic Charities, your donation creates a measurable impact in our communities across the diocese. Your prayerful considerations allow us to "Go, and do likewise" every day, focused the vulnerable and in need.

While you always have the option of designating your donation to a specific agency program (a restricted donation), unrestricted donations have a profound wide-ranging impact in supporting operations and our overall efforts to provide services. Catholic Charities is primarily grant funded, and most grants do not cover general business costs. Unrestricted donations drive our organization forward, enabling us to adapt, grow, and create greater impacts throughout our communities. If you have questions about this, please reach out directly to me at AsktheCEO@ccsomo.org. Thank you for your prayerful consideration!

Merry Christmas to you from the team at Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri! Wishing you hope, love, joy and peace this holiday season.



Chief Executive Officer
Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri

P.S. Tax credits offer a great opportunity to support our agency and reduce your state income tax obligation in significant ways. Each dollar's impact is even greater as we seek to achieve our mission.



UPCOMING EVENTS

LIFEHOUSE IN SPRINGFIELD 10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

January 17, 2024

Join us to celebrate 10 years of life-changing services and 133 healthy babies! Bishop Rice will say Mass at SEAS at 12 pm with a reception and tours to follow at LifeHouse.

**RSVP to rkeller@ccsomo.org.
Bad weather date: January 24**

LIFEHOUSE IN CAPE GIRARDEAU GRAND OPENING

April 19-20, 2024

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

More details to follow closer to date.

MISSISSIPPI MINGLE **May 11, 2024**

Mississippi Mingle is moving to the Spring! Join us in Cape Girardeau for a day of good food, live music, and family fun on the banks of the Mississippi.

****DATE CHANGE****

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS GOLF TOURNAMENT **June 24, 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!

DINNER FOR LIFE SPRINGFIELD **September 21, 2024**

BABIES AND BOWTIES CAPE GIRARDEAU **November 2, 2024**

A WORD FROM BISHOP RICE

Dear Supporters of Catholic Charities,

On the First Sunday of Advent, the Gospel calls us to “Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come.” With that call to be alert, Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri is constantly seeking out those in need—the hungry, the homeless, those who have lost hope and are unaware where to turn for assistance.

Leading up to our celebration of the Birth of Christ, the weeks of Advent serve as a time to prepare our hearts for the coming of the Savior. Our Lord, who came “in the flesh,” sanctified our humanity and gave us a vision where every person has dignity and worth.

Catholic Charities is the charitable arm of the Diocese of Springfield – Cape Girardeau and all of the good work on the parish level is enhanced throughout the diocese through their work with the disabled, those facing natural disasters, crisis in housing, veterans, maternal support, and home rehabilitation.

As we prepare to receive Christ anew in our hearts, let us at the same time stretch out our hands in generous support of those in need. Your financial commitment to Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri will make a positive difference in the lives of others. Be assured of my prayers for a blessed and joy-filled Advent and Christmas Season.



YOUR GIVING CAN REDUCE YOUR MISSOURI STATE TAXES

Maternity Home Tax Credit (MHTC)

70% tax credits for individuals

Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP)

70% tax credits for individuals with business income

Affordable Housing Assistance Program (AHAP)

55% tax credits for individuals with business income

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE OF HOW TAX CREDITS WORK:

You donate **\$5,000** to LifeHouse

Your 2023 state tax obligation is **\$3,500**

You receive a credit of **\$3,500** from the state.

**70% of your \$5,000 donation*

You now owe the state of Missouri **\$0**

For more information, contact Rhea Keller at rkeller@ccsomo.org, (417) 720-4213, or scan the QR code.



A NOTE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN

Dear Friends in Christ,

God created this world for love, and we were created to love God and our neighbor. Jesus spent his entire life with the sick and outcast, revealing a special love for those most in need. Catholic Social Teaching encourages us to imitate Christ's love for the poor by working to create a society where the needs of the poor are always considered first.

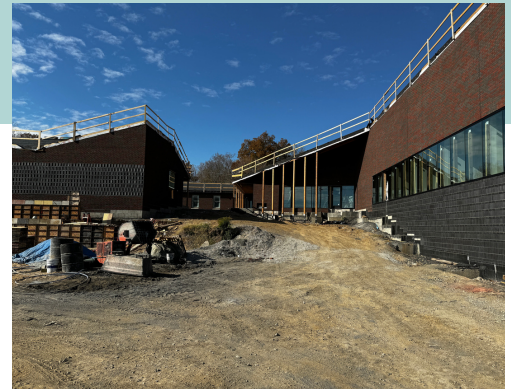
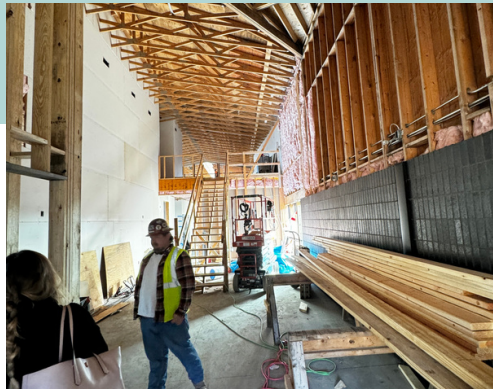
As we look around our world at injustice and conflict, he calls us to His pattern of love: we see victims and perpetrators, and in loving them without limits we imitate Christ and challenge every injustice and any demeaning of human beings. The Church's love for the poor is a part of her constant tradition. This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of his concern for the poor. The primary purpose of this special commitment to the poor is to enable them to become active participants in the life of society. It is to enable all persons to share in and contribute to the common good. For the church, a preference for the poor is not optional.

Jesus was born poor, lived poor and died poor. From birth to death, the carpenter's son embraced the roughness of the wood, the harshness of human existence. If anyone who truly wanted to love Jesus, serve Jesus and share Jesus must not be distracted by any forms of consumerism, but instead, find concrete ways to help out the poor and vulnerable. Saint Teresa of Ávila said it beautifully; "Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours, yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world, yours are the feet with which he walks to do good, yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world...."

Yes, indeed! "...our hands can become His hands; our eyes, His eyes; our heart, His heart."

God bless you and remain blessed.

The Very Rev. Shoby M. Chettiyath, V.G.



LIFEHOUSE IN CAPE: CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Construction of LifeHouse in Cape is on pace to be completed by the end of January or early February. Brickwork is still ongoing and the wood posts have been installed around the courtyard and at the main entrance. Shingling has begun on the roof and should finish later next week. Concrete paving is ongoing at the west parking lot and ramp to the front entrance. Once the west parking lot is completed, they will begin on the east parking lot.

Work is ongoing on the exterior of the second floor and the ceiling in the administrative wing. The resident wing had its first coat of paint applied. The north wing and common area still have mechanical, electrical, and plumbing work underway. The drywall finishers have moved into the south wing. The east wing is ready for sheetrock and they are currently drywalling the basement.

We are very excited about the progress and can not wait to open the doors to the public on April 1, 2024 and begin serving Southeast Missouri. Grand opening events are scheduled for the weekend of April 19-20, 2024.

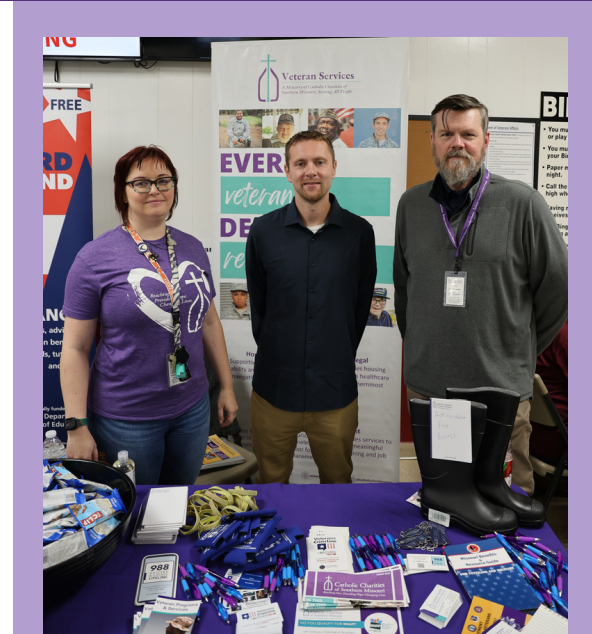
A huge thank you to the donors who helped bring LifeHouse to southeast Missouri!

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: VETERANS SERVICES

Veterans Services is comprised of two programs: Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) and Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF). Through these two programs, our staff works with veterans who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, have limited income, or lack employment. Our highly qualified case management team works with clients to overcome the barriers they are facing to create lasting change and long-term success.

Our Veterans Services staff regularly attend outreach events across southern Missouri to connect veterans with our services. SSVF Case Manager Nabhira Mascorro spoke to the importance of these outreach events, explaining “these events **help connect Veterans to the resources that they are eligible for and are often in need of. Also, outreach events are important for direct service providers to network with one another to better aid and inform their clientele**”.

Our Veterans Services enable us to give back to those who served our country. A Veteran family was recently enrolled into our Rapid Rehousing program. Due to a lack of shelters in the area, SSVF stepped in with Emergency Housing via a hotel voucher. The couple had been sleeping in their car and couch surfing with a toddler in tow and another baby on the way. Thanks to the emergency shelter and our employment specialists, the Veteran obtained gainful employment. Additional income was needed to meet requirements held by local property owners. After multiple rounds of applications and negotiations with property managers, the family was offered a unit. They will be moving into their new house this week, right before the holiday season begins. Through case management, emergency supplies, and emergency housing (all elements of the Veterans Services program) the family was able to gain enough stability to achieve permanent housing.



Veterans Services staff members Nabhira, AJ, and Michael at a Veterans stand Down event in November.

MOUNTAINTOP HOMES GROUNDBREAKING



On October 23, we celebrated the groundbreaking of Mountaintop Homes.

Mountaintop Homes is a community that will bring safe, affordable, and inclusive housing to homeless/at-risk veterans and mixed-income families. The site will consist of 42 townhouse units on 11.4 acres in Mount Vernon.

We are thrilled to partner with O'Reilly Development on this project that will not only provide a place of belonging but also the supportive services needed to achieve housing stability. Catholic Charities will provide an on-site case manager who will work directly with Veterans to identify needed resources and aid them on a path of long-term success.

At the groundbreaking ceremony, Bishop Rice planted a Miraculous Medal in the ground and, with members of our board and staff, prayed the Hail Mary, asking Mary's blessing on the project and all those who will be served at Mountaintop Homes.

Construction updates will be provided throughout the process.

Pictured above: Shovel line ceremony with CCSOMO Leadership, Bishop Rice, O'Reilly Development representatives, and Mt. Vernon city officials.



Pictured left: CCSOMO staff and board members at the groundbreaking ceremony.

EXCITING NEWS: OUR NEW WEBSITE IS LIVE!



Scan the QR code to visit the brand new ccsomo.org. There you'll find pages dedicated to our six programs, information about events, volunteer opportunities, and so much more!

PROGRAMS

Construction Services

Developmental Disability
Services

Disaster Services

Housing Services

Maternal & Family Programs

Veterans Services

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: SEAS CATHOLIC CHARITY SERVICE CLASS

At St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, 6th-8th graders have a "choice" period during which they attend a class of their choosing. Different options are offered by the middle school teachers, and include Art Exploration, Book Club, What's Cooking Chefs, and Mrs. Holly Wilson's *Catholic Charities* class.

Hear from Mrs. Wilson about her motivation for starting the class: **"The focus of Catholic Charities Choice Class is not only to provide community service to Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri but also to educate the middle schoolers on what it means to be Catholic and how they, as middle schoolers, can give their time, talent, and treasure. They hear this all the time in school, but they don't really know what it means as a 12-14 year old. I wanted to give them an idea of what they can do now: service, prayer, donations to what they can do as adults: charitable jobs, types of service, and charity."**

Over the last few months, the class has completed a variety of service projects to benefit Catholic Charities and LifeHouse, including a baby bottle coin collection, a school supply drive, and Halloween goodie bags for the LifeHouse toddlers and babies. In November, the class visited our campus at St. Anne's Monastery for a groundskeeping day.

Elly Joy, one of the 6th-grade students, explained her choice of class: "Mrs. Wilson's class has taught me to be kind to people because you never know what they are going through. This is what I see when I help Catholic Charities. I love helping others and this class gives me that opportunity".

We have a variety of individual and group volunteer opportunities available. If interested, please contact Jill Guise at 417-720-4213 or jguise@ccsomo.org.



STAY CONNECTED!



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

