



# CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SOUTHERN MISSOURI

DECEMBER 2025



## COMMUNITY SHINES AT LIFEHOUSE GALA IN CAPE GIRARDEAU

On November 1, supporters from the Cape Girardeau area gathered for a joyful evening at the annual LifeHouse Gala. With Cuba Financial Group as the presenting sponsor, the celebration featured live music from the Nashville Blue Tones and brought the community together in support of LifeHouse Crisis Maternity Home.

The evening's keynote speaker, Dr. Karlyle Christian-Ritter, Director of Neonatology and Neonatologist at Saint Francis Medical Center, shared a compelling message about the impact of LifeHouse. Drawing from her work caring for newborns, she highlighted how the support LifeHouse provides to mothers directly influences the health and outcomes of the babies she serves.

Thanks to this incredible outpouring of support, the funds raised will make a meaningful difference in the lives of the mothers and babies served at LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau.

Mitch Miller was honored with the Little Flower Volunteer of the Year Award. We'd like to extend our heartfelt thanks to event chairs Rhonda Cuba and Becky Talley, the planning committee, and the many volunteers who made the gala such a success.

Save the date: The next LifeHouse Gala, Cape Girardeau, will be held on November 7, 2026.



### IN THIS EDITION

Cape Gala Success

Ken's Column

Upcoming Events

A Word from Bishop Rice

Tax Credits

Client Spotlight

Candlelight Concert Recap

Monthly Giving Societies

Volunteers Needed:  
Transportation at LifeHouse

# KEN'S COLUMN

At charities like ours, it's easy to feel the weight of scarcity. Need often outpaces resources. Requests arrive faster than checks clear. And when every dollar matters, urgency can harden into fear: Can we meet the need?

But here's the truth we see every day: abundance isn't measured only in budgets. It's measured in people, in generosity, hospitality, and in the shared belief that communities can rise together. And thanks to you, we see that abundance in motion constantly.

Abundance looks like a single mom finally exhaling because the safety she needs is there. It looks like the veteran who feels stable because of the roof he's under. Abundance looks like the smile on a disabled individual's face when we coordinate services to improve their life. It looks like volunteers who give their time as if time itself were plentiful. It looks like you, choosing to invest in hope instead of holding back in uncertainty.

When we shift from scarcity to abundance, we stop asking, "What can we afford to lose?" and start asking "What can we unlock?" That shift isn't naïve. It's practical. Data shows that communities with strong social support networks experience better health, better economic mobility, and greater resilience. Your giving creates those networks, helping to build a future where fewer families feel the grip of scarcity at all.

Thank you for believing that abundance is possible through Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri, and for helping us prove it every day.

Warm wishes for a wonderful Christmas and New Year!



Ken Palermo  
Chief Executive Officer  
Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### BISHOP'S MASS FOR CCSOMO

**March 28, 2026**

Join Bishop Rice in Cape Girardeau for a special Mass for Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri. Location is TBD.

### MISSISSIPPI MINGLE

**June 6, 2026**

Join us in Cape Girardeau for a day of good food, live music, and family fun on the banks of the Mississippi. Keep an eye out for tickets on sale this Spring.

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

**June 22, 2026**

Tee off at Fremont Hills Country Club to benefit CCSOMO's LifeHouse in Springfield. It's never too soon to start assembling your team!

### LIFEHOUSE GALA SPRINGFIELD

**September 19, 2026**

Spend an evening celebrating LifeHouse in Springfield with dinner, entertainment, and more at the White River Conference Center

### LIFEHOUSE GALA CAPE GIRARDEAU

**November 7, 2026**

Enjoy a special night of dining, auctions, and fun at the Drury Plaza Hotel Conference Center in Cape Girardeau.

### BISHOP'S COLLECTION FOR CCSOMO

**November 21-22, 2026**

Annual diocesan-wide collection for Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri,

# MERRY CHRISTMAS

from Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri  
and Bishop Rice

*and a Happy New Year!*

## A WORD FROM BISHOP RICE

“May the miracle of Christmas fill your day with wonder, your life with beauty, and your heart with gladness.”

Those words, from a Christmas card, similarly echo the words I spoke in response to a man who recently asked me, “Why should I have faith?” My answer was simple. I told him that in my experience, faith broadens our vision to see beauty in ugliness. Faith recognizes that there's more to life and the world than what we see. Faith gives meaning to the simple acts of providing food or drink to those in need. While not as eloquent as the words on the Christmas card, I hope you get the point! When we live for others, life takes on a whole new meaning.



In his recent document on the poor, “Dilexi Te” (“I Have Loved You”), Pope Leo XIV reminds us, “Love for the Lord then, is one with love for the poor.” They go together. This is nothing new. The Scriptures tell us that we are called to love God and one’s neighbor. And when we do so, we often get a glimpse of wonder, beauty, and gladness.

In the spirit of Christmas, and as an act of faith, I encourage you to make an end-of-the-year gift to advance the work of Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri. Your financial support is an act of faith, an act that will touch the hearts and lives of those in need throughout southern Missouri.

With my prayers for a blessed Christmas and a very happy new year, and with gratitude for all of your assistance, I am,

Sincerely, Yours in Christ,

The Most Rev. Edward M. Rice  
Bishop of Springfield-Cape Girardeau

# 2025 TAX CREDITS ARE STILL AVAILABLE!

As the calendar year comes to a close, Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri's tax credits are still available. Don't miss an opportunity to maximize the impact of your giving while reducing your state tax liability.

A tax credit is different from a deduction—a credit has the same value as cash. A tax credit is deducted dollar for dollar from what you owe in income taxes to the State of Missouri during a taxable year. 70% of your donation will be used as your tax credit (see below for example). This amount is in addition to the regular state and federal deductions you are eligible to take for charitable donations. The full value of your donation will go to support Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri.

**Thank you to those who have already donated to the tax credit program this year!**  
**For more information: Suzanne Cronkhite at [scronkhite@ccsomo.org](mailto:scronkhite@ccsomo.org) or call (417) 720-4213.**

## Maternity Home Tax Credit (MHTC)

### 70% TAX CREDITS

*for those with personal and/or business income*

*Supports LifeHouse Crisis Maternity Home in Springfield and Cape Girardeau*

### HERE'S AN EXAMPLE OF HOW TAX CREDITS WORK:

Let's say, your Missouri state tax obligation is.....	<b>\$3,500</b>
You make a \$5,000 donation to LifeHouse which earns a 70% tax credit.....	<b>- \$3,500</b>
	<small>*70% of your \$5,000 donation</small>
You now owe the state of Missouri.....	<b>\$0</b>



## CLIENT SPOTLIGHT: WILLIAM, VETERAN SERVICES

When William, a U.S. Army Veteran, and his family suddenly lost their housing, they were forced to sleep in their van. A devastating situation made even more urgent with three young children. Through the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program, a CCSOMO case manager quickly stepped in to help. Within just two days, the family was safely placed in a rental unit in Joplin, Missouri.



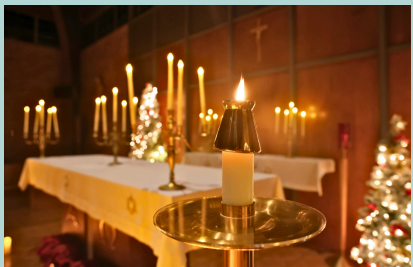
The SSVF team coordinated every detail to ensure a smooth transition: hotel assistance, a housing inspection, rental deposits, furniture delivery, and even arranging a U-Haul and driver to help move their belongings. When it was discovered that the family's stored clothing had been damaged, the program also assisted them in accessing new clothing and in connecting with local community resources for additional support.

Thanks to the rapid response, compassionate care, and partnership between SSVF staff and community organizations, William and his family were able to move from crisis to stability. Today, they are rebuilding their lives in a safe and secure home, surrounded by the support they need to thrive.

## CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS CONCERT



December 7th marked our Candlelight Christmas Concert at St. Anne's Chapel in Springfield, an evening that brought together families, friends, LifeHouse families, and our parish community for a celebration filled with warmth and joy. Soft candlelight and beautiful string quartet music set a peaceful, festive tone. Guests sipped hot drinks, enjoyed Christmas treats, and cherished the chance to visit with Bishop Rice and capture photos with Santa. It was truly a cozy and memorable way to welcome the season together.



# MAKE A MONTHLY DIFFERENCE

Making a monthly donation to Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri will support those that need it most. Join one of the NEW monthly giving societies and receive a lapel pin, dedicated newsletter, and prayer intentions at monthly Mass at St. Anne's Monastery in Springfield.



**Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne Society**

Supports *all* programs of CCSOMO.



**Saint Anne Society**

Supports LifeHouse in Springfield.



**Little Flower Society**

Supports LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau.

**DONATE NOW!**



## PROGRAMS

Construction Services

Developmental Disability Services

Housing Services

Maternal & Family Programs

Veterans Services

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

### LIFEHOUSE TRANSPORTATION VOLUNTEERS

As LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau prepares to welcome mothers and children into a safe and supportive home, one of the most important needs we face is transportation. Reliable rides help our residents get to medical appointments, counseling, classes, childcare, work opportunities, and essential errands—steps that are vital to building stability and independence.

We are seeking compassionate volunteers who can provide transportation on a regular schedule or as needed. Even a few hours a month can make a meaningful difference. If you're comfortable driving, enjoy connecting with others, and want a simple but powerful way to support the mission of LifeHouse, this role may be the perfect fit.

If you feel called to help or would like more information, we would love to welcome you to our volunteer team.



To become a volunteer, please contact the Advancement Team at 417-720-4213 or [volunteer@ccsomo.org](mailto:volunteer@ccsomo.org).



STAY CONNECTED!



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

