



# CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SOUTHERN MISSOURI

OCTOBER 2025



## LIFEHOUSE GALA, SPRINGFIELD: HUGE SUCCESS!

The 2025 LifeHouse Gala, Springfield was truly magical! Not only was the event sold out for the second year in a row, \$450,000 was raised for LifeHouse Crisis Maternity Home in Springfield.

A special thank you to the LifeHouse Gala, Springfield chairs, the event committee, and volunteers for their hard work and dedication to the event. We could not have done this without your help!

We'd also like to recognize the anonymous donor who made the matching gift. The \$65,000 matching gift for Fund Our Mission donations was not only met, but surpassed. We feel incredibly blessed by the outpouring of support from our community. We hope you'll join us next year for the LifeHouse Gala, Springfield on **September 19, 2026!**

## IN THIS EDITION

Ken's Column

Upcoming Events

A Word from Bishop Rice

Bishop's Collection

Program Updates

Client Spotlight!

# KEN'S COLUMN

## CELEBRATING LOVE IN ACTION: A GRATEFUL REFLECTION ON OUR GALAS

As I reflect on the joy, energy, and generosity surrounding our recent fundraising galas, my heart is filled with awe, humility, and gratitude. These evenings were more than events, they were living proof of what happens when a community unites to serve others with compassion, faith, and love.

Each person who attended, donated, volunteered, or lifted us in prayer became part of our greater story, one of hope and new beginnings for those we serve. The laughter, conversations, and shared moments in those ballrooms reminded us that when we come together for a cause bigger than ourselves, lives are transformed.

Those present did not simply fill a seat at a table. They provided a message of solidarity to mothers seeking safety and support. Every paddle raised, every check written, every kind word spoken echoed far beyond the walls of the events and clearly rippled into the lives of the vulnerable who now know they are not forgotten.

Because of the generosity expressed throughout the Diocese, we can strengthen our crisis maternity home services and continue answering the call to be Christ's hands, feet, and heart in action. These galas were sold-out evenings of celebration, but more importantly, they were a beacon of love in action, shining brightly across our communities, as we go and do likewise.

From the bottom of my heart—thank you. You are superheroes without capes, difference makers who help us carry this mission forward each day. Together, we are not just raising funds; we are raising hope.

With gratitude and faith,



Ken Palermo  
Chief Executive Officer



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### LIFEHOUSE GALA, CAPE GIRARDEAU

**November 1, 2025**

The LifeHouse Gala held at the Drury Plaza Convention Center in Cape Girardeau, the event will feature dinner, exciting auctions, The Nashville Blue Tones, and more to support LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau.

### WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

**November 16, 2025**

A day to encourage communities to care for the poor.

### BISHOP'S COLLECTION FOR CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SOUTHERN MISSOURI

**November 22-23, 2025**

Diocesan-wide collection. Stay tuned for more information from your parishes. Please give prayerful consideration to a gift to Catholic Charities.

### GIVING TUESDAY

**December 2, 2025**

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

### TASTE OF CCSOMO

**December 7, 2025**

Join us for a Christmas concert at St. Anne's Monastery in Springfield. Join us as a string quartet perform a holiday arrangement, followed by a social hour with Christmas treats.



# GO AND DO LIKEWISE



Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri



## A WORD FROM BISHOP RICE

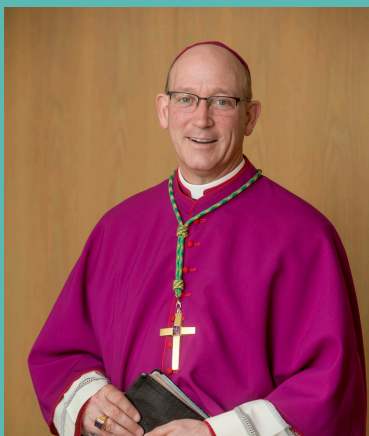
“The poor can be witnesses to a strong and steadfast hope... They cannot rely on the security of power and possessions; their hope must necessarily be sought elsewhere.”  
—Pope Leo XIV, 9th World Day of the Poor, Nov. 16, 2025.

During this Jubilee Year of Hope, we are reminded that the poor reveal to us the truth of the Gospel. As Pilgrims of Hope, we draw strength from Christ—the source of all hope—and are called to “Go and Do Likewise.”

Pope Francis reminds us that the greatest poverty is not knowing God. The poor often have a deep openness to faith; we must not fail to offer them His friendship, blessing, and care.

At Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri, we serve as the hands of hope and love—helping homeless families, pregnant mothers, veterans, and individuals with developmental disabilities. In 2024, we assisted over 2,000 people across southern Missouri.

As one Church, East to West, let us bear witness to hope, love, and mercy. Please support Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri. Be a Pilgrim of Hope: “Go and Do Likewise.”





**THE BISHOP'S COLLECTION**  
for Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri  
NOVEMBER 22-23, 2025



**WAYS TO GIVE**



Envelope in this newsletter.



At Mass on November 22-23.

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.

During 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. One-time and monthly donation options are available.

VISIT

**CCSOMO.ORG**



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



**"Catholic Charities and their staff have changed our lives, and we are forever grateful!"**

**– CCSOMO Housing Client**

**JOIN THE ST. ROSE PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE MONTHLY GIVING SOCIETY**



**\$50**

could provide healthcare navigation for our veterans.

**\$100**

could provide housing case management for vulnerable, low-income families.

**\$150**

could provide transportation for our LifeHouse babies to get to healthcare appointments.

St. Rose Philippine Duchesne Monthly Giving Society members receive a lapel pin, dedicated newsletter, and inclusion in prayer intentions at monthly Mass at St. Anne's Chapel in Springfield.

*Want more information about giving to Catholic Charities?*

Contact Suzanne Cronkhite, Chief Advancement Officer, at [scronkhite@ccsomo.org](mailto:scronkhite@ccsomo.org).

**Scan the QR code to make a donation online or make a donation at Mass today.**

November 1, 2025  
Drury Plaza Convention  
Center



NIGHT OF A  
**LifeHouse**  **Gala**  
cape girardeau

# Thousand Stars



PRESENTED BY



BENEFITTING

By the time you read this, the LifeHouse Gala in Cape Girardeau will have just wrapped up! Thanks to the dedication and hard work of our incredible committee, we know it was a wonderful success. We can't wait to celebrate the results with you in our next newsletter. If you haven't yet had the chance to support LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau, scan the QR code below to give. Thank you to everyone who helped make this event possible!

## PROGRAM UPDATES: What Has Your Catholic Charities Been Up To So Far This Year?

**Mountaintop Homes** opened in Mt. Vernon, bringing 42 affordable housing units to individuals and families in need. Eight units are set aside for veterans in need of stable housing. This development is an excellent example of partnership, thanks to O'Reilly Development, Great Southern Bank, and numerous other organizations. The most remarkable piece of this effort is our ability to house a case manager on-site! This project has garnered national attention through other Catholic Charities organizations, as well as opportunities to share with interested state and federal lawmakers.

Our **Developmental Disabilities Services** Program expanded to two additional counties, now serving Butler and Dunkin, in addition to our current service areas of Cape Girardeau, Scott, and Mississippi counties. Our specialized teams provide guidance and access to resources to meet the distinct needs of those with developmental disabilities.

We successfully renewed our **Veterans Services** grant, building on our history of providing vital stabilization services to those who served. To date, over 100 veterans have avoided homelessness due to the efforts of our dedicated and compassionate team members.

After thoughtful business analysis and prayer, CCSOMO decided to discontinue other **Housing Programs** in response to changes in federal program requirements and funding. CCSOMO collaborated with other area providers to ensure that the needs of the homeless and those at risk could continue to be met.

More than 100 life stories have been rewritten at our **LifeHouse** locations in Springfield and Cape Girardeau just this year! Since October 2024, we've welcomed 66 women into the program and celebrated the births of 37 beautiful babies.

Recently, Pope Leo XIV wrote to Catholic Charities across the nation, expressing gratitude for the life-giving ministries we offer. His comments centered on the virtue of hope, quoting Pope Francis's "...desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring." Pope Leo deemed Catholic Charities' staff, volunteers, and supporters as "agents of hope..." a designation we willingly accept in our hearts and minds as we work to change lives into 2026 and beyond.

If you have questions about CCSOMO programs, please reach out to Ken Palermo, CEO, at 314-882-2410.

# CLIENT SPOTLIGHT: FROM CUSTODY TO CONFIDENCE: A JOURNEY TO SELF-GUARDIANSHIP

Matt's story with Catholic Charities began when he was just a child in the custody of the Children's Division. Diagnosed early with a developmental disability, he faced challenges that made stability and independence seem out of reach. But with the help of Catholic Charities' Developmental Disabilities (DD) program, Matt began to find hope and support.

As he grew older, new challenges appeared—especially as he prepared to transition out of Children's Division custody and into adulthood. His Catholic Charities support coordinator and provider agency worked closely with him to create a person-centered plan. The focus was clear: increase independence, build self-advocacy, and prepare Matt to have a voice for his own future.

With encouragement and training, Matt learned about his rights, how to advocate for himself, and how to make decisions for his future. As his 21st birthday approached, discussions turned to guardianship. While some professionals recommended full guardianship, Matt and his team believed he was ready for more. Together, they advocated for self-guardianship—with support available when he needed it.

Their confidence in him proved right. Thanks to his hard work and determination, Matt was granted self-guardianship. Today, he continues to grow and thrive, supported by a team that believes in his abilities. His journey is a powerful reminder of what can happen when a person's voice is truly heard.



## PROGRAMS

Construction Services

Developmental Disability  
Services

Disaster Services

Housing Services

Maternal & Family Programs

Veterans Services

Want to support Catholic Charities by volunteering?  
Contact [volunteer@ccsomo.org](mailto:volunteer@ccsomo.org) to find out more.



STAY CONNECTED!



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

