

# Catholic Charities

Spring News 2022



## Director's Letter

### Dear Friends,

This year is marked by the Catholic Church as the "Year of the Family." The definition of "family" may be different for each of us, but the love and commitment we have toward the people to whom this label is given stays true. We often have an image in our mind of how the "perfect family" looks, but let's face it, we all experience trials and struggles that challenge the ability of the family to stand together. The truth is that families, no matter your definition, are complex but are always meant to help us find love and connection.

We know that many of the families that visit our programs are nontraditional by societal standards, but to its members they are just family. In the Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Francis titled "Amoris Laetitia" which translated means "The Joy of Love," we are told that "all family life is 'shepherding' in mercy. Each of us, by our love and care, leaves a mark on the life of others." It is a profound "spiritual experience to contemplate our loved ones with the eyes of God and to see Christ in them." At Catholic Charities Terre Haute, we strive to do work that leaves a positive mark on the lives of those we serve.

For many of the children who frequent Ryves Youth Center, the staff and volunteers have become members of their family. The center itself often becomes a gathering place for their family to receive a nutritious meal and participate

in activities. In fact, in this newsletter, you will see how the teens of Ryves are becoming mentors to the younger youth – often using their own experiences to teach and motivate.

Finally, as we recap the numbers from our last fiscal year, we will remember a very special volunteer of our Christmas Store. Her presence was not only a reminder of how our work helps local families but also how our volunteers become a family themselves. The loss of Audrey Cox was difficult, but we rejoice in sharing our fond memories of her commitment to serve.

Take a moment in the upcoming days to reflect on your family, both in the traditional sense and perhaps even the nontraditional. What impact are you making? What memories are you creating? And as Pope Francis says, "see your loved ones with the eyes of God and see Christ in them."

Stay safe and healthy,

**John C. Etling**  
Agency Director

# Initiatives

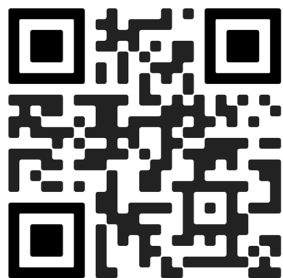
## Caring for God's Creation

As Catholics, we are taught to show our respect for God by being good stewards of His creations. Caring for the earth is not just something we should do on April 22nd (Earth Day) but all year long as a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet. One way we are fulfilling this mission is through a new program at Terre Haute Catholic Charities Foodbank that will help to reduce the amount of food waste generated through our donation program.

A small percentage of the food we receive is unable to be distributed due to expiration, damage or mold. We have long-standing relationships with local farmers who often take some of this food waste for animal feed or composting. In 2021, we began a new partnership with the White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, specifically to benefit their organic farm. A ministry of the Sisters of Providence, White Violet Center for Eco-Justice at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods includes an organic farm that provides fresh, local fruits, vegetables and flowers to the community. A grant, made possible by the Kroger Company Zero Hunger Zero Waste Foundation, allowed us to purchase hoppers to hold food waste and a trailer to transport the waste to the farm. Here the food is added to existing compost and used to provide nutrition to the soil at local farms and gardens.



**VIEW  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**



**5.6 million**  
pounds of food distributed

**6**  
individuals gained  
employment

**35,340**  
meals served  
through Fishes  
& Loaves  
Soup Kitchen



**684**  
children  
participated in  
physical activity

**30**  
individuals placed in  
permanent housing



**3,328**  
individuals received  
items from Clothing Closet



## Ryves Youth Center



Two teen attendees of Ryves Youth Center, Kierra and Sienna, are living out Pope Francis's call in "Amoris Laetitia" by speaking to the elementary-aged children about the risks of substance abuse. Openly talking to the children about their personal experiences with nicotine and vaping makes an impact on their future choices and prepares them for future peer pressures.

The in-person prevention presentation provided information and a space for sharing experiences with substance exposure. Kierra and Sienna designed the presentation and shared that "they have dealt with substance exposure, and they wish to impact younger aged youth to avoid the perils of substance use." The group was engaged and actively participated in the discussion. One of the presenters, pregnant and 15 years old, gave a compelling talk, and many of the youth shared their mothers were also teen moms.

Presentations from their peers hold the attention of the youth in an organic way, and the staff at Ryves hopes to continue to engage the youth in discussions like these.

## Friends Become Family

When new volunteers come to our Agency, they often stay for years. We are proud to have created an atmosphere where volunteers become our friends and family. One such volunteer was Audrey Cox who volunteered at the Catholic Charities Christmas Store for 28 years! She loved interacting with the families and was always encouraged to see the impact our generous community had on so many Christmases. She treasured the holiday season and spending Christmas with her loved ones.

Audrey went to be with the Lord in November of 2021 at the age of 101. Her daughter, Sandy Cox, follows in her footsteps and has volunteered at the Christmas Store for the last 10 years. Audrey's kind smile and dedication will be missed by the people we serve, the staff and the volunteers of Catholic Charities.

During the 2021 Christmas season, **1,498 individuals** from 411 low-income families received household items, personal hygiene products and clothing for each member of the family as well as toys for each child.

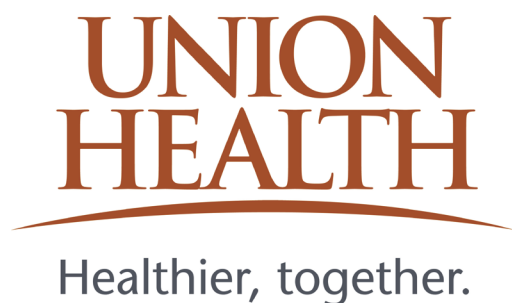




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The Church in Central and Southern Indiana



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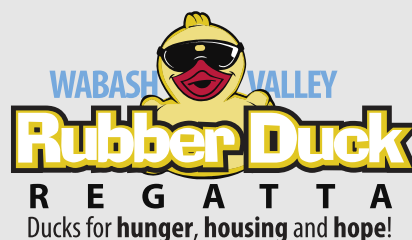
## A Gift that Can Benefit You

Donors 70 ½ and older may use Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) to donate up to \$100,000 per year to the charity of their choice. At age 72, these donations count as required minimum distributions. For more information on how you can utilize QCDs in your giving plan, please contact Jennifer at [jbuell@ccthin.org](mailto:jbuell@ccthin.org) or (812)232-1447.

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Saturday, June 18  
Learn more and register at: [quickquack.itsyourrace.com](http://quickquack.itsyourrace.com)



Opening day is May 23, 2022. Your chance to win \$10,000 is on July 4!