



## Spring News 2024

### Director's Letter

#### Dear

Resilience in the face of adversity is not taught in a classroom or detected through a medical test. Adversity can take various forms, including self-doubt, physical injuries or illness, rejection, poverty, loss of a loved one, or struggling to succeed in one's chosen career. For many of those we provide help to, it's not just about having an emergency fund or a preparedness plan. It's often a more immediate, reactionary response. The resources needed to handle an eviction, the loss of a loved one who is also the family's provider, divorce, or incarceration can push a fragile, vulnerable family into a downward spiral with little hope of recovery.

Jerome, a manager with one of our retail partners, recently approached me while I was browsing his store for a birthday gift. He expressed concern about the economic challenges many people are facing today, particularly regarding food insecurity and homelessness. Jerome asked, "Where does someone go who needs food for their family? Where do they go if they need shelter?"

In response, I provided Jerome with a card containing a QR code that directs to our website, which features a calendar of all the food pantries and soup kitchens in Vigo County. Additionally, I shared the contact information for our shelter program, Bethany House, in case he knew someone who needed housing assistance. Jerome thanked me and mentioned that he knows several individuals in the community who are experiencing reduced work hours. He emphasized the importance of finding ways to meet these needs in the coming months.

Carrie is a single mother to three children, ages 3, 5, and 9. It has been over a year since they transitioned from Bethany

House to their own home, which is conveniently located near her oldest child's school and the daycare attended by her two youngest. Carrie works up to 30 hours a week but relies on others for transportation. She explains, "It makes it difficult when one of the kids is sick or needs to visit the doctor. I have to be creative to make it work, but mostly I pray that God will provide." Carrie admits that in the past, she would get upset when things didn't go as planned, which in turn would upset the children. However, she has since learned to better manage her emotions. "I'm always mindful that I need to be thankful," shares Carrie. "Even when we can't get what we need."

Our goal at Catholic Charities is to help individuals and families gather the pieces and, to the best of our ability, rebuild their lives. We collaborate to find local resources that offer services like long-term housing, healthcare, mental health counseling, childcare, addiction recovery, and job training. I am extremely grateful to our staff for their commitment to helping others. Through their patience and service, we've managed to transform help into hope, giving those we serve the opportunity to recover and overcome adversity. In the following newsletter, you will read about Summer's journey to stability and Leesa's Path to redemption, both representing examples of women who are displaying resilience in the face of adversity.

God bless,

**John C. Etling**  
Agency Director  
Catholic Charities Terre Haute

# Finding Light in the Shadows: Journeys of Hope at Bethany House

Throughout the year, we encounter numerous women and families with diverse aspirations, ranging from improving their health to saving money for housing and stability. Danielle Elkins, program director of Bethany House, says "There's all kinds of different reasons why individuals come to our doorstep...When they come here...they may not have documentation, they may not know the services available to them so we do a lot of referring out and help them just get back on their feet." By providing them with the tools they need to succeed, they begin a journey toward rebuilding their lives, piece by piece.

## Summer's Journey to Stability

"I was just living in Terre Haute and I didn't have a place to go," says Summer, "I didn't know how to get an apartment. I didn't know how to get a house. I don't have any family here and I don't have any connections here."

Summer, a current resident at Bethany house is 23 years old and says her current focus is saving money for a place to live. "It is hard to be a woman and sleep on the street," shares Summer. "This place has saved my life. Meeting new people who love me for who I am and support me and no one is asking me anything or any favors or anything anymore and I feel amazing...I put myself first, and I should have put myself first a long time ago but now I finally am."



## Leesa's Path to Redemption



Leesa, 56 years old, shares that she is a recovering addict, alcoholic, and a grandmother of 4. "I've tried to commit suicide a number of different times," Leesa admits, "got stuck on the needle, and every time I stuck that needle in my arm I was literally trying to commit suicide."

Leesa currently resides at Bethany House and is on her 5th stay there. "They opened their arms back up and allowed me back in," Leesa shared. "For me, I have to forgive myself for my wrongdoings." On her journey to health, Leesa contributes around the house and credits Danielle, program director of Bethany House, and the staff for providing the support and encouragement she needs.

"This is the best place for me to be," Leesa states, "I know they're not going to let me mess up. They keep me accountable...There is help out there, all you have to do is ask."

## Ryves Family Night: A Community

Ryves January Family Night was a hit, thanks to our amazing community partners: THHA, WICAA, Prospect Bank, Anthem, Ivy Tech, Girl's Coalition, CODA, Veterans Court, Disabled American Veterans, CASA, Pamela Malone, and the Vigo County Public Library. Their support made it possible for families to connect and learn through presentations, activities and resources. This event showcased the power of community collaboration and our collective ability to provide help and create hope. Thank you to our partners for their commitment to our community. We look forward to more successful events together!





# Promoting Healthier Food Choices at Terre Haute Catholic Charities Foodbank



We are excited to share some recent developments at Terre Haute Catholic Charities Foodbank aimed at promoting healthier eating habits among our neighbors. In our ongoing commitment to serving the community's nutritional needs, we have implemented HER Guidelines (Healthy Eating Research) and developed a Nutrition Policy for ranking items within the Foodbank. HER Guidelines are evidence-based recommendations designed to enhance the nutritional quality of food distributed through charitable food systems.

The goal is to make nutritious food choices more accessible to those who rely on food pantries and reduce their risk of chronic illness related to diet. To achieve this goal, we have implemented a simple yet effective color-coded system. Foods in our inventory are now labeled with one of three colors:

- 1. Green (Choose Often):** These are items that align with Healthy Eating Guidelines and are encouraged for regular consumption. They are low in saturated fat, added sugar, and sodium, making them ideal choices for maintaining a balanced diet.
- 2. Yellow (Choose Sometimes):** Foods labeled with yellow should be consumed in moderation. While they may contain slightly higher levels of certain nutrients, they can still be enjoyed as part of a varied diet when consumed occasionally.
- 3. Red (Choose Rarely):** These items are flagged for their high levels of saturated fat, added sugar, or sodium. While they may be appealing, they should be consumed sparingly to minimize the risk of negative health outcomes associated with excessive intake of these nutrients.

By implementing this color-coded system, our goal is to enable individuals and families to make informed choices about the foods they consume. Through initiatives like HER Guidelines and our Nutrition Policy, we strive to create an environment that prioritizes health. We believe everyone deserves access to nutritious and healthy food options.

## ENDOWMENT FUNDS IMPACT OUR COMMUNITY TODAY AND TOMORROW

Have you considered how you can impact the future of our community forever? One effective way is by establishing an endowment fund with the Catholic Community Foundation (CCF), the official foundation of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The foundation's mission is to provide lasting financial support for parishes, schools, and ministries while helping donors align their philanthropic interests. Last fiscal year, CCF distributed over \$10M in annual distributions to parishes, schools and ministries across the Archdiocese.

An endowment fund is a permanent fund that is invested and grows over time utilizing the growth of the market. The initial gift or any subsequent gifts forms the principal of the fund – which is never touched. Each year, a portion of the fund's interest growth is distributed to support the mission of the beneficiary of the fund. The leftover interest is reinvested into the endowment and the fund grows.

An Endowment fund to benefit Catholic Charities Terre Haute can impact our organization today through annual distributions, while the growing fund ensures available financial support for tomorrow and beyond. Contact Jennifer at [jtames@ccthin.org](mailto:jtames@ccthin.org) or call (812) 232-1447, Option 3 for more information.



PO Box 3318  
Terre Haute, IN 47803  
ccthin.org



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## "Is a Qualified Charitable Distribution for you?"

Use this opportunity as a chance to make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) through an Individual Retirement Account (IRA). Donors 70 ½ and older may use QCDs to donate up to \$100,000 per year to a charity and receive unique tax benefits. At age 73, these donations count as required minimum distributions. Contact Jennifer Tames with questions or to give - jtames@ccthin.org or 812-232-1447 x 107

*Tax or legal information provided herein is not intended as tax or legal advice. Consult with your legal, tax or financial advisor before implementing any gift plan.*

## Exciting News from TIME for ME Mentoring Program

In an effort to reduce bullying and cyberbullying among our youth, something new is coming to Ryves Youth Center.

Stay tuned for more updates!



## Upcoming Events



**Quick Quack 5K Trail Run**  
June 22nd



Register Now!



**Duck Season**  
Opens May 24



Learn More!

[www.ccthin.org](http://www.ccthin.org)



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