



The Mission

CATHOLIC CHARITIES • Diocese of Arlington

Faithfully Serving in 100 Locations Across 21 Virginia Counties and 7 Cities!

It's Fall Harvest Time



THE ST. LUCY PROJECT
Feeding the Hungry, Nourishing the Soul

October through December marks “Fall Harvest,” a critical time of the year for our collective efforts to feed the hungry across the 21 counties that make up the Catholic Diocese of Arlington. Last year, close to 152,000 pounds of food was collected during the Fall Harvest season.

Thanks to the ever-growing Saint Lucy Food Distribution Program, Catholic Charities and all its parish, school and collaborating non-profit partners will engage in an intense three months of food collection.

For the 2017 Fall Harvest push, 15 parishes have already signed up to collect food including:

- St. Katharine Drexel Mission
- Christ the Redeemer
- St. Ambrose
- St. James
- Holy Family
- All Saints
- St. Catherine of Siena
- St. Jude
- St. Mary/St. Joseph
- St. Mary of Sorrows
- Holy Trinity
- St. Luke
- St. John the Baptist
- St. Joseph-Herndon
- St. William of York

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Packed and Back to School!



Fifty children from families in need are off to a good start for this new school year with donated personalized backpacks loaded with school supplies and prayer card. Ruth Guillen, Emergency Assistance Case Coordinator for CCDA, came up with the backpack event idea last summer after witnessing so many families with school-age children without resources.

Imran Gill, a maintenance worker, says he would not know what to do without the help of Catholic Charities. He lives in a one-bedroom apartment with his wife, mother and three school-age children. “It is really hard for me to buy school supplies because I cannot afford it. Catholic Charities are like angels to us. I’m so grateful to them,” he says.

Now, in its second year, the annual Back to School Backpack event at Christ House in Alexandria is really helping families and their children.

“I am so grateful to all those participating in the Catholic Charities school backpack giveaway,” remarked the Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Arlington. “This endeavor is a wonderful opportunity to assist those who need our support as a new school year begins. May we always help each other to carry the burdens we encounter in our daily lives. In doing so, we praise the Lord.”

If you are interested in volunteering or making a donation for emergency assistance programs like this, please e-mail Ruth Guillen at RGuillen@ccda.net.

● PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,
At Catholic Charities, we remember Pope Francis' call to serve the Lord and to answer the cry of the poor with concrete deeds; "Let us love, not with words but with deeds." These concrete actions occur through encounters with the marginalized in our world. In this issue of **The Mission**, you will see how Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington is encountering by reaching out to the periphery, the vulnerable, the forgotten, the geographically separated, the hungry, and, in short, the poor.

We are excited about Pope Francis' calling for the First World Day of the Poor in our diocese and around the world on November 19. This World Day is meant to appeal to our consciences to encounter the poor so we will have a deeper understanding of the Gospel.

Pope Francis reminds us that poverty means having a humble heart that helps us to overcome sinful temptations, not making material accumulations our priority in life, and trusting God's grace as we shoulder personal and social responsibilities.

It's Fall Harvest Time

There is still time to participate but many weekends are full so please try and be flexible with dates. There are no parishes booked in December. It is a great time to give during advent and hunger is a year-round issue.

Volunteers are always needed at the local parishes and the Manassas Warehouse to unload food. Contact your food ministry if you would like to help and/or go to ccda.net and click on volunteer if you would like to help in the St. Lucy Warehouse.

Fall Harvest Shopping List

Please consider donating the following items for Fall Harvest Food drives.

Nonperishable Food

- Canned chicken and tuna
- Soups (including low sodium)
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Rice

Fall Harvest in support of the Saint Lucy Food Distribution Program is an excellent example of how we are encountering our rural brothers and sisters. The food that you donate reaches more of those in need through partnerships with parishes and food banks throughout the 21 counties in our diocese. These relationships grew due to shared goals of developing awareness about hunger and encountering the vulnerable of our communities. Additionally, we are incredibly grateful to our Knights of Columbus brethren who make so many deliveries.

Our work with vulnerable children is a pillar of Catholic Charities. Several examples of these encounters are highlighted throughout **The Mission** articles. In particular, you will read about two young refugees, Khatera and Shayesta, assisted by Catholic Charities' Migration and Refugee Services. These young ladies want to share their joyful and hopeful views of their futures, how grateful they are for the opportunities that the U.S.A. has given them, and remind us of our civic duties.

Of course we cannot fully assist others if we do not attend to our own prayer life, health and essential needs. A study shows that a great way to increase well-being and joy is through volunteering! Therefore, by loving through deeds and encountering the marginalized in our world we receive the benefits of greater social ties, better health, a sense of purpose, and prove what the Gospel declares.



Art Bennett
President and CEO
Catholic Charities of the
Diocese of Arlington

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- Pasta and pasta sauce
- Dry and canned beans
- Canned vegetables (including low sodium)
- Cereals, hot and cold (including low sugar)
- Canned fruit (low sugar)
- Juice (low sugar)
- Coffee, cooking oil, and condiments
- Paper products
- Baby items, such as diapers, wipes, formula, and bottles

Monetary Donations

It costs 88 cents per pound to deliver food to the hungry across our service area. Please consider a cash gift in addition to food donations. We also gratefully accept Walmart & Giant gift cards. Make checks payable to **Catholic Charities** with "St. Lucy Food Program" on the memo line.

Food and monetary donations can be dropped off at one of the four CCDA St. Lucy program sites.

- **The St. Lucy Project Warehouse** - 8426-8428 Kao Circle, Manassas, VA 20110 703-479-2975, Monday - Friday; 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- **Christ House Pantry** - 131 S. West St., Alexandria, VA 22314 703-548-4227 Wednesday and Thursday; 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- **Loaves and Fishes Pantry** - 613 N. Royal Ave., Front Royal, VA 22630 540-252-4320 Thursday and Friday; 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- **Leesburg Regional Office Pantry** - 316 E. Market St., Leesburg, VA 20176 703-443-2481 Monday - Thursday; 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

For more information call (703) 479-2975 to speak with the Saint Lucy Food Distribution Program staff.

● NEW PROGRAM INITIATIVES

Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic

The Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington Board of Directors is pleased to share the establishment of the new *Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic*, a fruit of the Year of Mercy, and named for the maternal care that the Church provides. This free medical clinic will fill a gap for an estimated 57,000 uninsured individuals in the Manassas area in need of critical medical services.

The new clinic will operate in the location that was once an abortion clinic. Two years ago, a group of Catholic entrepreneurs in the Manassas area purchased the facility with the agreement that the abortion clinic would cease operations. Wanting to serve the needy in the community, they turned to Catholic Charities.

After research, CCDA determined that the area needed a free medical clinic for those with no insurance coverage. The new clinic will not charge the clients receiving basic medical care they couldn't otherwise obtain, and all of the

doctors and nurses who will work at the free clinic will volunteer their time to provide this free medical care. In addition, CCDA will also provide other important complementary services including counseling, emergency assistance and referrals for workforce development and immigration support.

Dr. Scott Ross, a deacon serving Holy Trinity Parish in nearby Gainesville, will be the volunteer medical director of the clinic. Dr. Ross is also a family physician with the Novant Health UVA Health System (Novant). Novant will also partner with CCDA to provide low-cost medical services for qualifying individuals. Additionally, CCDA is partnered with Bon Secours Health System to set up an ethics committee to support the clinic.

On November 19, 2017, in honor of World Day of the Poor, the new Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic will be blessed by Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Arlington.



"Our Lady of Ostra Brama" (Our Lady of Mercy) is the patroness of the Marian Province in the United States.

For more information regarding volunteering, donations, or general inquiries call Dr. Michael Horne at (540) 371-1124.

Retreat for People Facing Serious Illness

Founded in 1978, the Retreat for People Facing Serious Illness was unique in the United States, according to Reverend Robert Cilinski, CCDA Board member and Episcopal Vicar of Charity for the Catholic Diocese of Arlington.

It was founded by McLean, VA-based Missionhurst Father Paul Wynants, Dorothy Garrett, Jo Magno and Steve Kulenguski and was supported by the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine de' Ricci who ran Dominican Retreat House in McLean. The Cursillo Movement continues to support the retreat through prayers, financial assistance and letters of support to the retreatants.

However, the retreats ended in 2015 when the retreat facility closed. Now, with the help of Catholic Charities, the retreat will continue and be held at the Catholic Diocese of Arlington's San Damiano Spiritual Life Center in White Post, VA.

The Retreat for People Facing Serious Illness offers a unique opportunity for persons who face serious physical illness to come away for a weekend retreat of spiritual renewal and refreshment.

The retreat is staffed by a team of gentle and attentive health care professionals who are available to participants throughout the weekend to ensure that medical needs are met. Experienced physicians and nurses, priests, helpers and volunteers are present to see that all are comfortable and are provided what they may need during the retreat.

The first retreat was held from Friday, September 22 to Sunday, September 24, 2017 at the San Damiano Spiritual Life Center in White Post, Virginia.

The retreat is free of any costs (thanks to our generous donors!) and is open to men and women.

The retreat includes talks, daily Mass, anointing of the sick, meals, sharing, Holy Hour and Benediction.



Source: Fabio Ruggieri / EyeEm / Getty

Everyone leaves the retreat feeling better at different levels, according to Father Cilinski. "Sometimes the healing we need is physical, but God wants to give us inner healing," he said. "Serious illness can be isolating, but the retreat has a joyful aspect of people being in community. It is a sharing of God's love."

If you are interested in joining us for our future retreats (June 2018 and October 2018), please email contact information to Retreat@ccda.net or call the main phone line at 703-841-3830 to leave a message. A nurse from the retreat team will be in contact with you about care needs and the application process.

● FIRST WORLD DAY OF THE POOR – LOVING WITH DEEDS

Responding in Actions and Deeds to First World Day of the Poor, November 19, 2017



In response to Pope Francis establishing a World Day of the Poor, we have planned a number of outreach gatherings for the week of November 13 through Sunday, November 19, 2017.

If you are interested in participating in any of these gatherings or volunteer opportunities, please contact Sally O'Dwyer at SODwyer@ccda.net. Please visit ccda.net as we get closer to this special week of awareness and action for final details, locations and time.

Monday, November 13:

Encountering our seniors at Saint Martin de Porres Senior Center in Alexandria.

Tuesday, November 14:

Join volunteers for a Prison Ministry Aftercare Project aimed at assisting Ex-Offenders establish a new and stable life.

Wednesday, November 15:

The CCDA Parish Liaison Network will gather for a discussion on the Church's Social Doctrine.

Thursday, November 16:

CCDA will conduct Know Your Rights Train the Trainer Presentation.

Friday, November 17:

PwC Employee Volunteer event will occur at St. Lucy Food Distribution Centers across the diocese.

Saturday, November 18:

Hogar Legal Program will conduct a Naturalization Workshop.

Sunday, November 19:

Bishop Burbidge will bless the new Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic in Manassas, VA.

Week of November 13-20:

The new CCDA Curbside Response Vehicle will collect critical self-care items for the homeless including toilet paper, diapers, toiletries and other personal items.



Sr. Annie discusses healthy eating with a client receiving fresh fruit and other food at Christ House.



These children are ready for the new school year with their donated backpacks and supplies. (See story on page 1)

“This new World Day, therefore, should become a powerful appeal to our consciences as believers, allowing us to grow in the conviction that sharing with the poor enables us to understand the deepest truth of the Gospel. The poor are not a problem: they are a resource from which to draw as we strive to accept and practice in our lives the essence of the Gospel.”

– Excerpt from the Message of His Holiness Pope Francis: First World Day of the Poor

● MIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICES

U.S.A. Means “You Start Again”

To young refugees involved with Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services, U.S. citizenship has a variety of meanings, including survival, literacy, safety, participating in community and civic activities, education (especially for girls) and obeying laws. For Shayesta, a refugee from Afghanistan, the U.S.A. means “**You Start Again.**”

Pope Francis has said that young people “**have a greater sensitivity toward injustice**” and encourages them to “be the first to seek to bring good, do not grow accustomed to evil, but defeat it with good.” An essay winner, Khatera, and another student and blogger, Shayesta, have seen the world’s injustices and exploitation first-hand; however they trust that starting again as U.S. citizens gives them the opportunity to pursue the adage “liberty and justice for all.”

Khatera believes American citizens have “no excuse” to not volunteer in their communities or be involved in civic activities. In her essay, Khatera said, “There are a bunch of volunteer opportunities that everyone can sign up for. We can start from our own little place where we live, by taking care of our neighborhood to keep our environment clean and safe.” Additionally, she wrote, “Good and active citizens are always looking for a good society and perform their responsibilities for their communities.”

Shayesta emphasized, “Resettlement and adjusting to a new community is not easy, and going through an identity change is not easy, learning a new language is not easy, accepting a new culture and way of life is not easy and yet **despite all these challenges I have an optimistic view of my future.**”

Reviewing what these two girls have written from a Catholic perspective

reminds us all to view our citizenship as a privilege. Catholic teaching calls us to use these privileges to seek social justice, recognize the many forms of poverty, to **see others as our brothers and sisters** and respect the Earth as our common home. Poverty has a myriad of meanings and challenges in our contemporary world. These include human faces marked by suffering, marginalization, oppression, violence, torture and imprisonment, war, deprivation of freedom and dignity, ignorance and illiteracy, medical emergencies and shortage of work, trafficking and slavery, exile, extreme poverty and forced migration.

Khatera and Shayesta have witnessed the transforming power of charity and are now, according to Shayesta, “simply trying to start again because we believe in the core values of America.”

As a program of Catholic Charities, **Migration and Refugee Services** offers a comprehensive array of resettlement services, provides financial assistance to refugees, and assists them in obtaining the necessary skills to promote early sustainable economic self-sufficiency.



*“My family’s transition to the United States was a matter of **deciding between death and survival**, it was about choosing between history and future and during this transition we all had to pay a steep price by being detached from our home in Afghanistan and by starting from zero.”*

– Shayesta, who spoke at a recent banquet for Migration and Refugee Services student graduates



Khatera, the winner of the essay contest, receives an award of funds toward college.

● MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Volunteering is Good for Your Health

Research shows that charitable service provides both physical and mental health benefits to the person doing the volunteering.

According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, volunteers have decreased mortality rates, greater functional ability, increased independence and lower rates of depression. Volunteering provides physical and social activity and a sense of purpose, especially for those whose social roles are changing.

Many people think of retiree volunteers, which is true, especially as baby boomers transition from the workforce. Yet, when the decision to serve is noncompulsory and provides a purposeful role in a community, volunteering is beneficial for all ages, especially the chronically ill, those with disabilities, empty nesters, and stay-at-home parents. Children who begin volunteering at a young age are instilled with the importance of volunteering,

which they will carry with them throughout their lives.




Charitable works can fortify the social ties that protect individuals from seclusion during difficult times, while the experience of helping others leads to a sense of greater dignity and trust. Positive social networks and connections reduce stress and risk of disease, which

in turn, lowers risks of poor physical health due to positive social psychological factors.

Want to help others and increase your well-being? Visit the Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington Volunteer page today and see the wide variety of ways you can use your skills and talents.

Why Doing **GOOD** is **GOOD** for Your Health

Completing acts of kindness can boost one's health and happiness. People who volunteer tend to experience fewer aches and pains, better overall physical health, and less depression. The benefits of doing good include:

				
Improved Self-Esteem	Longer Life	Sense of Belonging	Increased Happiness	Reduced Stress and Depression

Alan Holmer Shares His Volunteering Experience

We ask volunteers and donors why they choose to support Catholic Charities: Board Member Alan Holmer shares about making a difference with his volunteerism and the impact it has on his faith.

How did you get involved in Catholic Charities?

I spent 30 years living comfortably with my family in McLean, oblivious to the hidden poverty in our diocese – the couples living in tents in the woods right off Route 50, or the homeless men living at Christ House in Alexandria, all who desperately need a helping hand.

In 2006, I met Sally O'Dwyer who currently serves as Director of Volunteers for Catholic Charities. She is an excellent recruiter and had me hooked.

What exactly do you do in your volunteer roles?

I've helped out at Christ House in a bunch of different ways like mentoring the men and teaching a Ready to Rent class so they are prepared to be tenants when they leave. Like all Catholic Charities programs, we want Christ House to be truly transformative ... not just a period of respite with a bed and free meals.

Recently, I have had the opportunity to also serve in leadership roles – as the Finance Chair on the Board of Directors and as the Special Gifts Chair for the 2015 and 2016 Catholic Charities Balls.

Why do you choose to donate your time and resources to Catholic Charities?

The more I learned about the breadth and depth of Catholic Charities' programs, the more I could see how much is already being done for the poor in our diocese, but also how much more could



be done with more resources. Catholic Charities is an extremely efficient organization with 88 cents of every dollar going to serving the poor.

What do you find most rewarding about being involved with Catholic Charities?

Frequently, I have found that volunteering has broadened my heart, sometimes it breaks my heart, and has deepened my Roman Catholic faith.

I find the experience tremendously fulfilling.

● CORPORATE PARTNERS IN ACTION

Corporate Service Days – Working to Help Those in Need

Volunteers are vital to Catholic Charities' diverse ministries and outreach programs. CCDA is especially blessed and grateful to have corporate partners who encourage their employees to volunteer with various skillsets. Recently, TEEL Construction and PwC employee volunteers were hard at work encountering Catholic Charities clients and staff. Thank you for making a positive impact in our local community! For more information on how your company or business can conduct a corporate partners program with Catholic

Charities, contact Todd West at TWest@ccda.net.

Thanks to Mr. Parker Teel, President of TEEL Construction, and his gracious and generous employees, families at the Saint Margaret of Cortona Transformational Housing complex in Woodbridge, VA have new blinds for their apartment unit windows. TEEL Construction workers came with step ladders, measuring tapes, drills, and great energy to install close to 100 new permanent blinds properly.



Employee volunteers from PwC spent the day stocking the food pantry and tending the vegetable garden at Christ House in Alexandria, VA.

Christ House Thrift Shop

The Christ House Thrift Shop, located at 125 S. West Street in Old Town Alexandria, has been in existence for well over 30 years. The store has always succeeded due to word of mouth and now anticipates even better awareness for donors and customers, due to new signage at the corner of King and S. West Streets.

Stop on by anytime! We are always accepting donations. All profits from the store go to support the Emergency Assistance Program.



GET INVOLVED!

We need you to join Catholic Charities in making a difference in the lives of the poor! There are a variety of ways to give back – with the St. Lucy Project and with all of our programs. Your gifts of time, talent and treasure are priceless. To volunteer with Catholic Charities, please sign up on our volunteer page or contact Sally O'Dwyer at (703) 841-3838 or SODwyer@ccda.net. To make a financial donation, please make a gift online.

#GIVINGTUESDAY™

November 28, 2017
Make your gift at ccda.net

Your contributions will help us reach our goals for 2018!

- Distribute 1.1 million pounds of food through the St. Lucy Project
- Provide Emergency Assistance help to 1,250 clients
- Provide adoption and pregnancy related services to 700 clients
- Provide 60 cars to families in need
- Provide citizenship classes to 165 new or 180 current registrants
- Provide housing and supportive services to approximately 25 ex-offenders through new prison ministry aftercare initiative

Save the Date!

Friday, February 2, 2018

His Excellency
Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Arlington
and the Catholic Charities Ball Committee

cordially invite you to the



Ritz-Carlton, Tysons, VA

For more information on table sponsorships and underwriting opportunities contact
Anne Mathis at: a.mathis@arlingtondiocese.org



About Catholic Charities, Diocese of Arlington (CCDA)
Together, We're Transforming Lives!

- 100 direct and affiliated service locations across 21 Virginia counties and 7 cities
- Serves all regardless of faith, background, or circumstance
- 88 cents of every dollar spent goes to programs and services

Visit our blog and sign up to receive weekly or monthly updates at www.arlingtoncatholiccharities.com

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Our Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) number is 24770.