Marian House Community Outreach (MHCO) has nearly doubled their services in the past year throughout Catholic Charities’ 10-county service area. In 2015, over 20 tons of food, 2,072 bags of clothing, 172 new coats, and a myriad of items such as school supplies, kitchen wares, and hygiene products were distributed to food pantries, churches, and families.

The stronger effort to reach out beyond El Paso county has resulted in new collaborations with 12 local partners and 22 partners in the mountains and plains. Additionally, Catholic Charities hopes to establish a “sister parish” program to connect parishes in need with parishes that can offer help.

The Stratton Community Pantry has been able to expand to a year-round operation as a result of the increased support. “It really turned out to be one of the best things that we were connected with,” said Lynne Ware, longtime volunteer at the Pantry. While a food pantry exists in the nearby town of Burlington, Stratton residents in need could not easily make the 56-mile round trip to access services. Ware noted the growth of the pantry in the past few years has inspired more local community involvement. Recently the pantry purchased new gym shoes for students in need with donations from local residents. She hopes donors recognize “how many mouths they’ve fed and, to a certain extent, how many lives they’ve changed.”

In Colorado Springs, Grace Be Unto You Church provides assistance to up to 500 individuals a month on the southeast side of the city. During the Thanksgiving season, the Church found they were unable to meet the high demand for holiday assistance but thanks to the incredible support from Safeway & Albertsons (see page 6), MHCO was able to provide the Church with 200 turkey meals for their community. Pastor Bill acknowledged how valuable the support from MHCO is. “It’s a tremendous help. Because of Catholic Charities, we’re now able to reach and help more low-income families in the community. It’s a wonderful blessing.”
On behalf of all of those who were helped by Catholic Charities this past year, through the 75 programs in 10 counties we serve, I want to say thank you. This amazing year was inspired by you: the many men and women who have demonstrated that a belief in mankind can result in real change. Through the hours of volunteering and the many dollars that have been donated, we have come together to lift up our neighbors. With your help, we are caring for more of our neighbors and we are doing it better than ever.

We have increased our services to the rural communities of our diocese on the eastern plains of Colorado, in towns like Cheyenne Wells, Burlington and Limon. Partnering with Community Action Agencies -- small and incredibly effective social service agencies that serve the plains communities -- we have helped get needy individuals and families everything from clothing to turkeys and hams for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We have continued to offer naturalization and immigration services with “Know Your Rights” presentations to ensure the preservation of immigrant families. In the mountain community of Leadville, we partnered with the fire department and American Red Cross to get smoke detectors into mobile homes after a boy lost his life in a fire last spring. Now more than ever, when our communities need help, Catholic Charities is there to respond.

Nowhere has the impact of our outreach been as profound as in Douglas County where the number of individuals and families we served increased by more than 100% in the past year. The Catholic Charities Castle Rock Office is working closely with government and health & human service agencies to meet the needs, many of which are hidden, of the poor and vulnerable in Castle Rock, Parker and Highlands Ranch. We are so grateful for the individuals and parishes who support our work, and especially the parishioners at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church who provide space, financial support, and prayer to help us carry out our mission. In the coming year, we will continue to expand our services with new opportunities like family counseling to help meet the growing and changing needs of this community.

In Colorado Springs, we remain committed to our call to serve our poor and homeless brothers and sisters with 365 days of free meals and emergency services such as clothing, blankets, identification and mail service. One of our most significant expansions began last February when we partnered with Family Promise to operate the first and only day center for families experiencing crisis homelessness in Colorado Springs. This pilot project, housed in the Hanifen Center at the Marian House, opened on September 1st and has helped families transition from crisis to stability, whether through housing, employment or the monitoring of case management. In the coming year, Catholic Charities, in collaboration with other community agencies, will add to our support of families experiencing or at risk of poverty by providing consolidated services, that I believe will make one of the most profound and long-term impacts on poverty that our community has seen in years.

Throughout the years, you have helped us accomplish so much on behalf of the poor and vulnerable, and I thank you. Without your investment of time and treasure in the work of Catholic Charities, we could not make the kind of sustained changes that I have highlighted here. In a similar way, your help will be crucial in the months and years to come. As we reflect on the past and look hopefully to the future, I am reminded of the Apostle Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians: “Now as you excel in every respect, in faith, discourse, knowledge, all earnestness, and in the love we have for you, may you excel in this gracious act also.” (2 Cor 8:7) The faith and encouragement that St. Paul shared in his ministry is ours as well. I hope that you will continue to join us in this calling.
Las Posadas

Las Posadas was once again a moving cultural event, celebrated in December. Thank you to everyone who participated.

An excerpt from "Las Posadas"
written by Dave R. Rodriguez, Catholic Charities Donor

Our short trek that night symbolized the long journey of the young Holy couple of many years ago. They also sought a safe haven not just for themselves, but more importantly, for their soon to be born baby. The Las Posadas event was the perfect symbol for the same arduous journey that many people are making today in search of refuge and sanctuary. They are in search of a place to give of their talents, and to pool their resources with ours, looking for a place to give back to, and a place to simply call "home."

I was very moved by a presentation given by a young couple who recounted their own journey to find legitimacy and acceptance in our country, and how the Family Immigration Services of Catholic Charities of Central Colorado was instrumental in helping them find their place here, in our generous community. Thanks to Family Immigration Services, the young couple could now walk out of the shadows of our society and into the warm light of full participation among their kindhearted neighbors.

The people I spoke with and listened to that night helped me realize that we all just want to go home, home to a safe, warm place where our basic human needs are met. We may have gathered that evening as strangers, but we left that meal as friends.

Because of the eyes I looked into that evening, my heart was touched and I was moved to compassion. I decided to make a year-end monetary contribution to Family Immigration Services, and by making that donation, I know that I’m helping someone "come home."

Gift Societies

Become a member of Catholic Charities' Gift Societies!

- **1968 Founders Society** - minimum gift of $1,968
  - New Members: 3 Anonymous Donors
    - Richard and Kathleen Hansen
    - Samuel and Toni Carrico
    - Matthew Niedzielski
- **Caritas Society** - minimum gift of $10,000
  - New Members: Dr. J. Lewis and Jolene Romett

For more information, contact Janet Hutchinson at (719) 866-6440 or jhutchinson@CCharitiesCC.org.

Grateful to Our Grantors!

Thank you for investing in our mission to help anyone in need. We could not provide services in our 10-county area without your support!

Special thanks to The Anschutz Foundation for providing a general operating grant, which can be used where needed most throughout our programs.

We appreciate each and every foundation that puts its trust in us to accomplish meaningful outcomes to make our corner of the world a better place to live.

- The Anschutz Foundation
- Castaways Foundation
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- Security Service Charitable Foundation
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- Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation
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- USAA Foundation

LEFT: YOUNG VOLUNTEERS DRESSED AS MARY & JOSEPH. RIGHT: ESTRELLAS LATINAS DE SAN GABRIEL PERFORM A TRADITIONAL MEXICAN DANCE.
“I appreciate the opportunity to serve,” Bob said when asked why he volunteers at the Marian House Soup Kitchen (MHSK). “Having your own personal ministry that you’re comfortable with, that you’re not ashamed of...that’s important.” Bob was inspired by Pastor Peel of First Lutheran Church to cultivate a personal ministry, which he found at MHSK.

In 2000, Bob joined the volunteer group from First Lutheran Church, which has been preparing the meal at Marian House on Fridays for many years. Sixteen years later, he is the kitchen lead volunteer for the group. Bob’s leadership skills, from working as a CFO for multiple companies as well as serving on the Board of Directors for the Center for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (now TESSA), are put to use in the kitchen. He can be found at MHSK on Thursday afternoons, surveying the stock of food to plan the meal for the following Friday. Bob says, “The Operation Managers allow us to be creative. Part of the love of cooking is the challenge to make something good out of what we have.”

He returns to the kitchen early Friday mornings to direct his crew. He jokes, “You have to be recognized to be on the varsity team before I let you do certain things. And then we have the junior varsity. And if they really screw up, I put them back on the intramural team.”

He proudly describes a system he and his predecessor established years ago that remains a standard each Friday. Once a month, six volunteers take a donated turkey to bake at home so the group can prepare their signature dish: turkey & dressing, which Bob proudly notes, “clients look forward to.” This system allows for volunteers to participate, even if they can’t make it to MHSK for the volunteer shift.

As a longtime volunteer, Bob recollects the transition from the old MHSK building to the new one in 2008. He appreciated the opportunity to work with the lead cooks from other churches and recalls how they stood together when they were told MHSK operations would cease during the transition to the new kitchen. “We said, ”No we’re not. We’re going to make it work. And we did it (moved the kitchen equipment over a weekend without missing a meal).”

At home, Bob enjoys cooking but emphasizes that he is the Sous Chef to his wife, the true Head Cook. While he and his wife have their own personal volunteer efforts, they respect each other’s needs and are very supportive of one another. Ultimately, Bob’s passion for his work at MHSK stems from his belief that everyone should have access to a warm, nutritious meal, “That concept is important to me. They know that they can always get a hot meal and they know they can always see a smiling face.”
Saturday, March 12: Get Your Irish On!

Have you reserved your tickets for the 15th annual St. Patrick’s Day Gala? Hurry, this year’s event is expected to sell out!

The Gala will be held at the beautiful Cheyenne Mountain Resort on Saturday, March 12 beginning at 5:30 p.m. A fine Irish dinner will be served in addition to champagne, wine and live entertainment. This year’s silent and live auctions feature a trip to Tuscany, a villa at the Four Seasons Punta Mita in Mexico, a luxury condo in Park City, UT, a car, a Notre Dame football weekend, a poker party, xeriscaping, and much more.

For more details, to donate an item, or to purchase tickets, contact us at 719-866-6523 or visit CCharitiesCC.org/StPatsGala.
LIFE SKILLS CENTER BUSTLES WITH EXCITEMENT

The Life Skills Center (LSC) at Marian House, previously known as the Computer Lab, has seen significant growth in the past year. LSC, open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., has been bursting at the seams with clients! The success can be directly attributed to Sherry Stulpin, Life Skills Instructor, who offers individualized mentorship and instruction. She has a team of volunteers who work to meet the needs of clients seeking assistance.

In addition to the daily instruction, clients can participate in a monthly Financial Literacy class, led by ENT Federal Credit Union and Stulpin on a rotating schedule, to learn basic financial management skills. "The classes are really helpful in teaching basic financial skills. Many of our clients don’t understand the difference between net and gross income, which obviously makes a huge difference when trying to set a monthly budget."

Stulpin encourages clients to “plot their plan,” by setting a specific goal and a time-line to meet it. From finding a job to budgeting income, Stulpin helps clients choose goals that suit their individual needs. The names of clients who achieve their goals are written on the LSC’s “Success Board” to publicly acknowledge their hard work. Stulpin says, “Everyone wants to be on that board!” Nearly 100 clients (duplicated) visit the LSC each month, with many returning for multiple visits to meet their goals. Many have already found jobs using their newly learned skills. LSC has partnered with Discover Goodwill to offer a private job fair in February. Clients recommended by Stulpin are invited to attend the fair.

HOLIDAY MEALS FROM ALBERTSONS & SAFEWAY

Thanks to the generous support of Safeway, Albertsons, and Hormel Foods many families in need were able to celebrate the holiday season with traditional, hearty meals.

Safeway & Albertsons donated 912 turkey breasts with sides to the Marian House as part of the Thanksgiving turkey drive. The two grocery chains had been contributing towards holiday meals through Turkey Bucks donations from their patrons for several months where during check-out, patrons were asked to support holiday meals at Marian House. This is the third year Albertsons has participated and the first year of participation for Safeway as recently the two chains merged. They also made an additional delivery of 744 turkey breasts and sides one week before Christmas.

Safeway & Hormel Foods delivered 229 fresh, whole, boneless hams to the Marian House as a part of Hormel Hams for Hunger program to provide needed protein for hunger-relief organizations.

Turkeys and hams are served at the Marian House Soup Kitchen for special holiday meals, distributed to our rural partners, used in food boxes for families, and stored to be used in meal preparation throughout the year. “We are humbled by the generosity of this community and grateful to Hormel Foods, Safeway, Albertsons, and their customers, who are supporting families and individuals in need throughout our 10-county service area,” said Andy Barton, CEO of Catholic Charities.
CORPUS CHRISTI STUDENTS DONATE 230 PAIRS OF SOCKS

Thank you to the students of Corpus Christi Catholic School for their donation of 230 pairs of socks. The Student Council organized a “Socktober” Sock Drive, collecting socks in bins throughout the school during October. The council then organized the socks by gender and size before delivering them to Catholic Charities. As one of the most basic necessities, socks are always in high demand and rarely donated.

COATS FOR KIDS WITH THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

For the second year in a row, the Knights of Columbus partnered with Catholic Charities to distribute coats to children in-need.

The Knights provided over 450 new coats for the giveaway. 141 coats were distributed at a giveaway event. Coats were also distributed to rural partners through Community Outreach.

LIFE SUPPORT FAMILIES HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS

Life Support Services (LSS), which provides assistance to over 3,500 children each year, held its annual Christmas Gift Program in December. The program supports parent-child bonding by allowing LSC parents to sign up to receive new gifts for their children. This year, hundreds of toys were donated by Corpus Christi Catholic Church and Lockheed-Martin for the event. Additionally, many families were sponsored by individuals and businesses, including five families by Larry H. Miller Toyota of Colorado Springs and 2 families by Heuser & Heuser Law Firm.

In their first time partnering with Catholic Charities, Koscove Metal employees collected hundreds of toys which were given to the children at a party hosted by Koscove Metal. All the children received a full stocking and 54 families received complete turkey food boxes. Between both events, 460 children were given 674 gifts.

Material Needs:

**Food**
- Ground beef, non-dairy coffee creamer, hot chocolate, sugar, salt, non-perishable food items

**Infants & Children**
- Size 4 & 5 diapers, parents’ choice baby formula, baby food, new baby clothes

**Home & Transportation**
- Dishes, pots & pans, working vehicles

**Clothing**
- Coats, hoodies & sweatpants, men’s pants, hygiene items, men’s & women’s underwear

**Volunteers**
- Family day center volunteers, early literacy volunteers, & ESL teachers

*Drop off donations at the Marian House West dock*
*14 West Bijou Street*
*Mon - Sat, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.*
Mission Statement
In response to Jesus Christ’s call to affirm the value and dignity of each human life, to build solidarity within the community, and to advocate for justice for the poor and vulnerable, Catholic Charities of Central Colorado humbly engages in the ministry of charity for those in both economic and spiritual poverty so that all – staff, volunteers, and clients – may fully achieve their God-given potential.

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To Donate
Call (719) 866-6440 or visit www.CCharitiesCC.org

Catholic Charities of Central Colorado
228 North Cascade Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

WARM 600 HEARTS IN A DAY.
What a difference a day makes.
Sponsor a day of meals at Marian House
www.MarianHouseSponsorADay.org

For only $1,500, you, your business, organization or church can sponsor a day at Marian House. In that one day, your support provides a homemade, nutritious meal to everyone who comes through our doors. They are families with children, veterans, seniors, the working poor, and people who are homeless. Most just need a little help to make ends meet, but for some, this is their only hot meal of the day.

Commit to a sponsorship today by calling 719-866-6427 or online at MarianHouseSponsorADay.org

The St. Patrick’s Day Gala is Saturday, March 12th. RSVP NOW for this Fun event of the year! 719-866-6422 www.CCharitiesCC.org/stpatsgala