Marian House Provides Strength & Hope

For the hundreds of individuals that come through the doors of the Marian House each day, it is not just a place for a hot meal; it is a place of community. For Tracey, it is the support system that gives her the strength to keep trying, no matter how many times she becomes discouraged.

Tracey has been living in her mini-van for over three years. Following a heart attack in 2012, she faces multiple physical and mental disabilities that make even a part-time job difficult to maintain. Additionally, due to a dated felony Tracey cannot pass a background check - a requirement for most jobs. “The only reason it’s still a felony is because I can’t pay the fines,” Tracey stated. “And I can’t pay the fines because I don’t have a job, and I can’t get a job because I have the felony. It’s kind of a catch 22.”

Tracey visits the Marian House to meet her basic needs, such as a daily hot meal and mail services. She also meets with Velda, the on-site Penrose-St. Francis Community of Care Nurse, for help with prescriptions and other medical advice. In October 2016, Velda invited Tracey to the Woman’s Opportunity Workshops (WOW), where women can access resources and training in health, well-being, and career development. Tracey says the workshops are inspiring. “It’s nice going in there and finding out that you’re not the only one struggling.”

Tracey regularly attends WOW and has been working with Sherry Stulpin, Life Skills Instructor, for the past few months on her job search. Sherry says that Tracey stands out because, “she’s got a spirit like I’ve never seen. You can knock her over, but she just pops back up!” Sherry encouraged Tracey to become part of Catholic Charities’ Pre-Employment Program, which allows job seekers to work in temporary jobs or volunteer positions with Catholic Charities to earn some income and develop new skills. Through the Pre-

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Employment Program, Tracey is strengthening her resume with skills in food service and data entry. She was also connected with Goodwill Staffing, which provides temporary work on a weekly basis.

Despite being turned down for dozens of jobs, Tracey returns to the Marian House daily and diligently works on her job search. For her, the Marian House is a beacon of hope and a place of belonging during a time of struggle. “It’s giving me something to look forward to everyday. I don’t feel like I’m just wasting away. It helps knowing that somebody cares a little bit.”
“Better two than one alone, since thus their work is really rewarding. If one should fall, the other helps him up; but what of the person with no one to help him up when he falls? Again: if two sleep together they keep warm, but how can anyone keep warm alone? Where one alone would be overcome, two will put up resistance; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

Together, our hearts filled with Christ’s love and the power of the spirit, we continue to bring hope to our poor. As Catholic Charities begins our 49th year of service in the Diocese of Colorado Springs, we are most thankful for the many ways in which our volunteers, donors, Catholic and ecumenical communities continue to make this work possible. Poverty is one of humanity’s most brutal conditions, leaving our brothers and sisters hungry, cold, scared and sick. No individual nor single organization has the money, the power or the influence to fight poverty on their own. Surely, this was Christ’s reason for encouraging all of his followers to serve the poor; the knowledge that only a community in solidarity can hope to fight such an overwhelming foe. We must all be in it together.

We are reminded of the importance of doing this work together with every meal that is served at the Marian House. It takes a team of over 50 volunteers and staff, plus $1,500 in donations to feed our hungry every day, 365 days of the year. We were reminded in January that it is this human effort, and not necessarily the physical space, that is the heart of our response to Jesus’s call to serve the poor. When hurricane force winds knocked out the power to the Marian House, our community came together to ensure there would be no interruption in meals. Without electricity for 24 hours, we lost dairy, fruit and vegetables, and prepared foods, but saved all of our frozen meat. More importantly, our volunteers and staff together made sure that our guests did not go without a meal. On Monday, we served a hot lunch as usual under the battery operated back up lighting and made over 1,300 sack lunches the following two days while the soup kitchen was brought back on line.

During times like these, the efforts of people coming together to help are more pronounced, but this solidarity is present year round. In many ways, it begins with the support from our Catholic Church. Our clergy and their parishes support our poor both spiritually and financially. Through tithing and the Diocese of Colorado Springs Returning God’s Gifts fundraising campaign, Catholic Charities receives the foundational resources necessary to expand our reach and support.

Our ecumenical community continues to work alongside us as well, providing volunteer teams in the soup kitchen, working with us in support of our immigrant community and, increasingly devoting resources for families in need of housing and shelter. Our Family Mentor Alliance works with congregations of all faiths to build support teams for vulnerable families. By providing the volunteers and the financial support, these churches and parishes wrap their collective arms around families at their most vulnerable hour. Our faith community is an ally in times of crisis as well. In October, when our homeless families in Colorado Springs faced a shortage of cold weather shelter, it was our city’s downtown churches who provided the funding for motel vouchers. Through this effort, 26 families slept in hotel rooms rather than cars and tents when the coldest winter weather arrived.

While we have done so much, we know that there is still much more to do. Alone, the scope would wilt individual efforts, but as volunteers, parishes, staff and congregations, our “threesome cord is not quickly broken.” Together, we are loosening the grip that poverty has over our communities. We thank you for your prayers, your work and your gifts, but mostly, for your partnership in this profound calling.
On Monday, January 9th, Colorado Springs was hit with a powerful wind storm causing power outages all over the city. Both Catholic Charities’ main office and the Marian House facilities were without power for over 24 hours. Although the power outage forced the Marian House to close its doors for regular hot meal service for two days, it was a priority to ensure that anyone who came to the Marian House for a meal received a nutritious, high protein sack lunch. Since Catholic Charities took over Soup Kitchen operations in 1994, a meal has been served every single day.

Volunteers arrived early Tuesday & Wednesday mornings to begin packing sack lunches with peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, fresh fruit, pastries, and bottled water. The lunches were distributed to Marian House guests as they arrived for the daily meal. The Hanifen Center, which houses the Family Day Center, a variety of medical services, mail and clothing services, children’s and literacy services and many partner agencies, was closed on Monday due to the power outage, but resumed normal operations on Tuesday.

The lack of power led to the loss of all perishable foods - including dairy and prepared produce dishes which were stored in five refrigerators. Frozen meats, stored in 17 on-site freezers, were moved to an off-site storage facility to save the food from spoilage. Once power was restored all refrigerators and freezers were defrosted, cleaned and sanitized, and frozen food was moved back on site.

Following the public announcement of the damages to the facility and loss of refrigerated foods, Catholic Charities witnessed an outpouring of support from the community to help cover the cost of the damaging storm. Thank you to the volunteers for their flexibility and dedication to serve, the dozens of donors who provided financial support to help cover losses, and to staff who went above and beyond to help all affected by the storm.

**Grateful to our Grantors**

The Anschutz Foundation
Catholic Foundation of Northern Colorado
City of Colorado Springs: Emergency Motel Program
El Pomar Foundation
Mabel Horrigan Foundation
Philip S. Miller Trust - Douglas County
U.S. Bank Foundation
Walmart Facility #4853 - Castle Rock

**WORKING VEHICLES NEEDED**

Did you know that by donating a vehicle in good working condition, you can help a family achieve stability? We are currently working with many families who have found employment and housing, but need working vehicles to get to jobs and continue on the track to self-sufficiency. If you have a working vehicle in good condition that you would like to donate, please contact us at 719-229-9942.
Dust off your lucky shamrocks - it’s time for the St. Patrick’s Day Gala! Join us for a fun evening of fine dining, live and silent auctions, live music, dancing, entertainment, and more, all hosted at the beautiful Cheyenne Mountain Resort. This year the Mistress of Ceremonies will be Betty Sexton of KKTV and Kevin Patterson of The Patterson Group will conduct the live and paddle auctions. Thank you to our sponsors, committee members, volunteers and attendees for making this event a success!

**Support the Live or Silent Auctions:** If you or your business would like to provide a tax-deductible donation, such as an exclusive getaway, jewelry, spa package, or certificate for the silent or live auction, contact Terri at 719-866-6427 or TGray@CCharitiesCC.org.

**Buy Tickets or Tables:** Host all of your friends or invite a special someone for a one-of-a-kind St. Patrick’s Day celebration. Tables of 10 cost $1,250. Individual tickets are $125 or you can purchase a sponsorship. Tickets include a seated dinner, wine, welcome champagne, and dancing to the sounds of One More Shot. **Contact Betsy at 719-866-6422 or visit CCharitiesCC.org/StPatsGala to reserve your tickets today!**

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**St. Patrick’s Day Gala**

**Saturday, March 1, 2013 - 5:30 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.**

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**Make a Difference by Making a Gift**

[CCharitiesCC.org/Donate](CCharitiesCC.org/Donate)

- Make a Gift Online
  - Monthly Recurring or Ongoing Support
  - One-time
- Special State Income Tax Credits*
  - Enterprise Zone 25%
  - Donations to Marian House
  - $250 or more
  - Check only
  - Child Care Contribution 50%
  - Donations to Life Connections
- Gift Societies
  - Caritas Society ($10,000/year)
  - 1968 Founders Society ($1,968+/year)
- Sponsor-A-Day at Marian House ($1,500) (719.866.6427)
- Tribute Gifts – In Honor or Memory
- Planned Giving or Estate Planning
- Employer Matching Gifts
- IRA Distributions, Stocks and Securities
- New or Gently Used Goods**
- Vehicles in Working Order***

**Questions? Call us!**

Monetary Donations & Tax Credits: 719.866.6422 OR 719.866.6440*
Material Goods: 719.866.6281**
Vehicles: 719.229.9924***
Marian House can deliver 300 food boxes, distribute 1,000 articles of clothing, and serve over 18,000 meals in a month. At any given time the facility can store a 10-day food supply and thousands of articles of clothing and hygiene products. How does all this food and clothing stay organized? Lead Volunteer, David Thomas, plays a vital role.

Just over a year ago, David was living on the streets. He lost his job while battling a serious illness and was homeless for three years while he recovered. During that time, he found Catholic Charities and got the help he needed to get back on his feet. He recalls, “When I first came to the Marian House, what impressed me most was what I call the ‘open door policy.’ The doors are open, you’re welcome to come in and everybody’s just nice. I never felt like I was unwanted. Now that I’m in the position to give back, that’s what I do.”

David began volunteering in the Clothing Closet, distributing clothes to those who needed it. The staff quickly recognized David’s strong organizational skills and asked him to become Lead Volunteer in the basement storage area. David had spent many years as a senior executive in retail, making him very qualified to manage the storage facility. Working 6-8 hours a day, five days a week, David says it took about six months to sort the donations - especially the clothing - into the highly organized state it is in today. Working with several other volunteers, David insists, “I have a great team. Nobody can do it by themselves.”

The welcoming atmosphere of the Marian House is what kept David coming back as a client. As a volunteer, David helps welcome current clients by sharing his story of living on the street and saying, “I’m on the same level as you are. I’m not above you.” He insists the Marian House stands out from other agencies because of the vast number of resources and programs in one location. His role in keeping the storage organized keeps many of the programs running smoothly and efficiently. He says, “My work is appreciated. I feel it every day.”

For just $1,500, you can provide more than 600 meals to families and individuals who are hungry.

Call 719.866.6427 to Sponsor-A-Day

What Our Clients Say

“Catholic Charities took care of the small stuff, so I had the opportunity to worry about the big stuff.”

-Kenny, Family Day Center Guest
FAMILIES RECEIVE SPECIAL CHRISTMAS GIFTS

The annual Christmas Celebration at Life Support Services brought smiles to the faces of dozens of children and their parents. Children had the opportunity to visit with Santa and express their Christmas wishes. They also received stockings full of goodies and age-appropriate books. As a special gift, several community partners donated new shoes for children to take home. Thank you to these donors and volunteers for helping our families celebrate Christmas in a lasting and meaningful way.

SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS AT THE LORD’S DINNER

The St. Mark Parish Choir in Highlands Ranch spread Christmas Cheer through a performance at the Lord’s Dinner - a meal hosted every Sunday evening at Sacred Heart Parish in Colorado Springs. The dinner is a long-standing Sunday night tradition where people who are experiencing poverty or who are homeless can come for a hot meal and receive fellowship and services. Catholic Charities has been providing information and services at this event for the past year. The choir added a special holiday flair to the weekly event. Thank you for sharing your time and talent for this special Christmas concert!

LAS POSADAS

Guests celebrated Las Posadas, the traditional Hispanic event, on December 16, 2016. Young volunteers, dressed as Mary and Joseph, led a procession around Marian House, re-enacting the search for a place for Jesus to be born. The procession was followed by dinner and performances by singers, flute players, and dancers.

At Catholic Charities, this cultural event recognizes our mission to welcome the stranger. Donations made at the event help support our services for immigrants. Thank you to the attendants, volunteers, and sponsors for celebrating with us!
STRYKER CHRISTMAS

For the seventh year in a row, over a thousand Fort Carson soldiers descended on Marian House with non-perishable food, winter outerwear, children’s toys, camping gear, and more for the annual Stryker Christmas holiday event. Struggling families and individuals throughout the community were invited to attend and share in the outpouring of support from our Fort Carson soldiers and their families as they marched from Dorchester Park to Marian House, carrying their donations in field packs on their backs.

Thank you to the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, the City of Colorado Springs, the Colorado Springs Police Department and Homeless Outreach Team, the El Paso County Sheriff’s Office, the Salvation Army, the Colorado Springs Parks, Recreational & Cultural Services, First Presbyterian Church, First United Methodist Church, Gray Line, and Bestway Disposal for making this event possible.

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, grocery store and gas gift cards

Clothing: Coats, hoodies, sweatpants, men’s pants, blankets, men’s/women’s new underwear

Drop donations at the Marian House West Dock
14 West Bijou Street
Monday - Saturday, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Volunteer Needs:
Family Day Center Lead, Client Services Navigator, Clothing Closet Volunteers, Family Mentor Alliance Mentors
Call 719-866-6559 to get involved!

Building Parish Networks

Catholic Charities’ Community & Parish Engagement is helping build relationships between parishes in the Diocese of Colorado Springs by forging connections between more wealthy parishes to share resources with less fortunate parishes.

Recently, St. Patrick’s Catholic Church provided 40 new coats for children and adults in two parishes: Vietnamese Holy Martyrs and Our Lady of Guadalupe. Thank you for keeping our less fortunate brothers and sisters warm this winter.

What Our Clients Say

“The Lord’s blessings and gifts are surprises…and in that way, the Lord surprised me with the gift of the Marian House.”
- Gala, Marian House Guest
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.

Helping Hands is published four times a year. No article in this publication may be reprinted in whole or in part without permission of the editor.

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Don’t be fooled by the quality look of this newsletter. We are committed to using our funds in the most cost-efficient way possible so we can forward our work to reduce poverty in our community.

This newsletter is designed in-house by our Communications Team, printed on economical, recycled paper stock with vegetable based inks, and sized and organized to get maximum use of the press sheet paper we purchase.

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SUCCESS
to us is teaching Sarah the skills needed to find a job.

At Catholic Charities, we are more than a soup kitchen - we are here to help people succeed. Success to some people is finding a warm, safe place to get a meal. Or getting help to transition out of homelessness. Or learning the skills needed to get a job and change the direction of their lives. Success to us is making a difference, one life at a time.

Invest in Success.
Donate today by calling
719-866-6422 or online at CCharitiesCC.org