Good Food is Health, Wealth, and Security

Food is a gift. For many, gratitude for that gift is expressed in a blessing before meals. We are grateful for the gift of nourishment and strength for the active, healthy life it provides. Whether it’s a meal at home or in a restaurant, odds are most people choose the foods that support their unique tastes and nutritional needs. But what if poverty robbed you of that choice? Would you have the health and energy for school or work? Who would you turn to for help? The connection is simple: food equals health and health equals wealth and security. Catholic Charities understands that connection and works to provide a choice of foods through the Marian House Soup Kitchen and other programs.

Poverty and hunger go hand in hand. According to Census.gov, the poverty rate in 2016 was 12.7 percent. Sounds low until you realize this amounts to roughly 43 million people—13 million of whom are children. Poverty isn’t someone else’s problem, it’s ours. It touches every county in the United States, including the wealthiest county in our state – Douglas County, where 12 percent of children qualify for free/reduced lunch. Compounding the financial constraints poverty brings is the problem of food deserts (areas without nearby supermarkets or food outlets). In Colorado Springs, only 6 percent of the population live within a 5-minute walk to a supermarket. Without a personal vehicle or mass transit, getting groceries can be problematic. Often, families living in poverty only have access to convenience stores and for those living on the streets, the challenges become even greater due to the lack of refrigeration.

Food is health. Without quality food, physical and emotional well-being can suffer. People in poverty worry about their ability to survive and find their next meal. Few choices mean compromising on basic health concerns. Does this have too much salt? Is this safe to eat? Getting sick or having a sick child means missing work. A domino effect begins when missed hours equals less pay. Less pay means not being able to pay rent and missing a rent payment can lead to eviction and even homelessness. Catholic Charities’ flagship program for hot, nutritious meals is the Marian House Soup Kitchen, in our care for 32 years. With the generosity of donors and thousands of volunteers, quality food is prepared and served daily. Dairy products, such as yogurt and milk, and fresh vegetables and foods with plenty of fiber help ensure everyone gets the nutrients their bodies need.

For those who can’t get to the Marian House for that daily meal, we distribute more than 1,200 food boxes each year to seniors as well as families and individuals. We deliver food boxes to people without transportation and to rural community partners for distribution to those living far from services. Most boxes contain enough to sustain a family of four for a week. These boxes ensure people receive the food they need to say healthy and productive.

Food is wealth and security. Virgil once said “the greatest wealth is health,” and we see that connection every day at Catholic Charities. It’s no coincidence that 65 percent of program users say they have a chronic health issue or mental or physical disability. Access to reliable, nutritious food provides the health and energy for school or work, avoids sickness, and supports housing stability. Without Catholic Charities and the support of our amazing volunteers and donors, thousands more would be vulnerable to starting a downward spiral of health, income, and housing. This is why Catholic Charities makes sure food is available through a variety of programs. Food is the first step for many to achieving stability and we make sure that first step is an easy one. It’s hard to move forward when you or your child are hungry. It’s primal. It’s basic. It’s life.

You can provide the gift of health, wealth, and security to hundreds of people every day by making a monetary or food donation to the Marian House.
Dear Shareholder:

That is the opening you would expect from your brokerage firm in their annual report. In today’s market, chances are it would be followed by a lot of good news. For the sake of this column, I thought the title of shareholder was appropriate. Those who receive this newsletter hold symbolic shares of Catholic Charities through your investment of time, money, prayer, or all three. Moreover, you are a shareholder in our community through your commitment to the common good.

While philanthropic investment does not yield a financial return, there is a social return that can be measured and reported. Our returns are currently measured against three strategic goals:

1. **Address gaps in essential human services to improve physical, mental and spiritual health.**

2. **Assist families and individuals move toward stability and thriving.**

3. **Provide a pathway to economic stability.**

**Goal 1** focuses on expanding access to services, improved engagement with our clients, and broadening health and well-being services. Our performance on these three outcomes has exceeded our goals. The numbers served out of our Castle Rock office and our active rural sites have both increased year over year and dramatically since 2015. Additionally, our Marian House guest surveys show 360 individual clients reported a reduction in stress and 350 reported an increased knowledge of resources as a result of receiving services. Our access to health and wellness services through our partnerships with medical providers has been highly successful with 6,701 medical appointments and 195 individuals participating in healthy living workshops and events. 911 calls at the Marian House were cut by half since July of 2016.

Our approach in **Goal 2** has been to improve family functioning, build self-sustaining families, and help children thrive. I am proud to report we have been able to help 100% of our guests who set goals make progress toward them. As the “Family Goal Setting” graphic demonstrates, more than half of the families we work with achieved key economic improvement over the past year. In addition, 73 child participants in our English as a Second Language (ESL) program participated in literacy programming, 56 parents successfully completed parenting classes, and 100% of our parents reported their child’s safety increased.

**Goal 3** outcomes include enhanced employability, links to safe and stable housing, and the fostering of economic resiliency and opportunity. The success of our Life Skills and Career Development program is a highlight of this goal with over 250 job placements since July 2015. Our Family Mentor Alliance program continues to achieve remarkable results with 94% of participant households obtaining stable housing after 12 months in the program. Similarly, our motel voucher program for families achieved its goal of 25% success for families who were able to transition to safe and stable housing. We have facilitated economic resiliency and opportunity for our immigrant families with 352 individuals enrolled in ESL classes with 86% of students reporting an increase in the ability to communicate at work.

Of course, these outcomes are more than a return on financial investment. They are also a return on the investment of time and prayer. Either way, our message to you as a stakeholder is this: your investment in the value and dignity of human life has performed exceptionally well. On behalf of all those we serve, I thank you being a shareholder for our community.
Choosing to leave an abusive relationship can be one of the toughest choices a person can make. It can be particularly scary and lonely when you are escaping to a community where you don’t know anyone. Mary came to Colorado determined to turn her life around and make a fresh start. She worked hard to get here, and in the process of seeking a better life, she found Catholic Charities.

Mary had researched the area and made arrangements to stay at a safe house. There, she met with a case manager to help get on the path to stability. Her case manager directed her to Catholic Charities for bus passes, but she found so much more. She found Catholic Charities was not just a place to go for resources, but was a resource, full of opportunities she could access immediately to begin her new life.

After meeting with a Catholic Charities case manager, Mary was directed to the Life Skills and Career Development Center (LSCDC), where she met Sherry, a Life Skills Instructor. Mary says, “I felt that once I came [to Catholic Charities] and met Sherry that things were going to blossom for me,” and she was right. Throughout her hardships, Mary never gave up. As they worked through a plan which consisted of a number of goals to get Mary back on her feet, Sherry was most impressed that Mary was “always determined to not let her unfortunate circumstances stop her. She took ownership of her life and never let herself be the victim again.”

With Catholic Charities’ assistance, Mary was able to take a course called, All About Dignity, which taught her how to take care of people in their homes. Mary said, “I got way more out of the All About Dignity class than what [Catholic Charities] paid for it.” The skills she learned during her time with the LSCDC and from its resources “really empowered me to get up on my feet and gave me the confidence to go out and get employment.”

In April, shortly after the class ended, Mary began a part-time paid internship at a nearby senior day center, which she found through Employment First, an employment partner with LSCDC. She has been able to use her deep passion for care-giving and the skills learned through the All About Dignity class to help her clients. In late July, thanks to a couple from her church, she found an affordable apartment, which quickly became more a home than just a place to live. Catholic Charities helped her get settled by providing a home starter kit which included a variety of household goods and food.

Finding a new home and internship is not where Mary’s story ends. In August, with financial help from Catholic Charities, she applied to a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program and was accepted! While still working at the internship, Mary completed the CNA course and graduated in September. Then in October, she passed her CNA boards. During each step of this process, Mary would visit the LSCDC to seek advice. She found a new family at Catholic Charities - one that advises, supports and cheers for her, and she has tapped into all of the available resources.

As a certified CNA, Mary has agreed to work for six months with a partner of MGA Home Health, but is already looking further into her future. She stopped in at the LSCDC job fair in October to connect with Discover Goodwill’s HR recruiter to make sure her application for two CNA related positions had successfully been submitted. Not only has her self-esteem received a huge boost from her success and time with Catholic Charities, she’s very excited for the possibilities of the future. “Here I am today; I’m employed, I have an apartment, I have a church family, and I have a family here at Catholic Charities, which really helped me get to where I am right now.”

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“Catholic Charities has been a rock for me because of the people who made me feel welcome,” Mary says. “I never felt defeated since I got here, because Sherry gave me the confidence to do what I needed to do. Once I knew that I had a place to come and people to communicate my goals to, I felt that I could go out there and conquer the world,” and she did.
WAYS TO GIVE

The holidays are almost here and Catholic Charities has many ways to help you share your blessings and participate in the community. In addition to the standard IRS tax deductions, Catholic Charities offers several unique tax credit opportunities and community giving programs.

COMMUNITY GIVING PROGRAMS

25% ENTERPRISE ZONE
COLORADO STATE INCOME TAX CREDIT

This 25% state tax credit is a part of the community-wide effort to uplift economically distressed areas in El Paso County. Contributions of $250 or more to businesses that make improvements to this area qualify for this tax credit. This includes donations to Marian House programs - Soup Kitchen, Family Day Center, Family Mentor Alliance, Client Services, and Community Outreach. In a number of ways, these programs provide support for struggling individuals and families to help them reach a level of self-sufficiency.

To utilize this special credit, checks must be made payable to the "El Paso County Enterprise Zone" noting "Marian House" on the memo line. Checks are mailed to Catholic Charities, 228 N. Cascade Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80903. Credit cards are not accepted for this tax credit. A Colorado Taxpayer ID or the last four digits of your Social Security number must be included if this number has not been provided to us in the past.

50% CHILDCARE CONTRIBUTION
COLORADO STATE INCOME TAX CREDIT

The Child Care Contribution State Income Tax Credit was created to promote child care in Colorado. Your donation to Child Care or Life Connections adoption/child placement program qualifies for this 50% credit. Life Connections provides adoption services, counseling, early literacy programs and many more opportunities for children in our community.
LAS POSADAS - DECEMBER 15, 2017
@ MARIAN HOUSE

The story of Christ’s birth is told with flourish and faith-based exuberance in the annual celebration of Las Posadas, hosted by Catholic Charities’ Family Immigration Services. It is a traditional Hispanic Advent celebration symbolizing the search of Mary and Joseph for a place for Jesus to be born. Participants act out Mary and Joseph asking for shelter by forming a procession and singing a traditional song at the door that represents the “inn.” After being “rejected” at several doors, the actors playing Mary and Joseph are finally welcomed at the Marian House. The symbolism of being welcomed at the Marian House is not lost on those who attend this touching cultural event.

Las Posadas also celebrates our community’s commitment to helping those in need, including our immigrant brothers and sisters. Hundreds of people will come to the doors of the Marian House to ask for entry the same way Mary and Joseph requested a place to stay on the night Jesus was born. Upon arriving at the Marian House, guests are welcomed to the event with a musical fanfare and are then entertained with traditional music and dancing. They are also treated to a traditional Hispanic meal that usually includes enchiladas, tamales, green chili, rice and beans.

This event is a great way to celebrate the holidays. Mark your calendars for **6:00 p.m. on December 15**, and join us at the Marian House. The event is free, but donations are welcome to support the work of Family Immigration Services, which provides affordable immigration legal services to low-income individuals and families living within Colorado Springs, Castle Rock and surrounding regions.

For information or to become a sponsor for the annual Las Posadas event, contact Corey Almond at 719-866-6510.
VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA) AVAILABLE JANUARY 27 - APRIL 17

VITA will be available at the Marian House for individuals and families with household incomes of less than $54,000. Trained volunteers will prepare and electronically file state and federal tax returns assisting filers to access the credits to which they are entitled. All appointments are made through Pikes Peak United Way 211 and this year, appointments at the Marian House will be scheduled for mornings only. For more information contact United Way 211. If interested in becoming a VITA volunteer contact Deanna at dtoney@ppunitedway.org. Training must be completed by January 22, 2018.

JOB FAIR AT CATHOLIC CHARITIES A HUGE SUCCESS!

Almost 100 potential job seekers attended the Second Annual Catholic Charities job fair on October 4th, hosted by Catholic Charities Life Skills & Career Development Center (LSCDC) at the Marian House Soup Kitchen. The event was such a success, it will now be held twice a year instead of just annually. The next job fair is scheduled for April 2018.

All employers attending the fair took applications from prospective employees. One employer said, “I am so amazed at the great people I met. I will definitely be back!” Based on initial reports, in just the first few days after the event, four people had already been hired and at least 20 others were actively interviewing. As of October 25, LSCDC has placed clients in over 250 jobs. In addition to a solid list of employment partners, several businesses are also working with Catholic Charities to provide apprenticeship positions, leading to long-term careers.

MASS CELEBRATED FOR CATHOLIC CHARITIES

On October 20th, a special Mass for the Work of Catholic Charities was celebrated by Bishop Michael J. Sheridan at St. Mary’s Cathedral. With around 75 attendees, Bishop Sheridan spoke to the importance of charity both in terms of charity by an individual and charity by an institution.

If you missed the annual Mass, you can still attend our monthly Prayer and Mass. Morning Prayer is scheduled the second Thursday of each month in the Courtyard of Compassion at Marian House at 7:30 a.m while afternoon Mass or prayer is the fourth Thursday of the month in the Hanifen Center Lobby at 2:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to either service and we encourage you to bring your family and friends.

THANK YOU NORTHERN PARISHES FOR DONATING 500 COATS

The Castle Rock Office recently collected around 500 winter coats from the generous parishioners at five Catholic churches in the northern part of the diocese. Thank you Ave Maria in Parker, Our Lady of the Visitation in Kiowa, St. Francis of Assisi in Castle Rock, St. Mark in Highlands Ranch and St. Mary of the Rockies in Bailey for your kindness this winter season! We delivered the coats to those in need at several food pantries and other community events in Douglas County, Elbert County and Park County.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES NAMED A 2017 BEST WORKPLACE

The Gazette announced it 2017 Best Workplaces on November 30th and Catholic Charities was named one of the top places to work in Colorado Springs. Thank you to Catholic Charities staff, management, board, and clients for making this a great place to work!
SAVING THE DATE FOR THE CELEBRATION OF 2018!

The 17th annual St. Patrick’s Day Gala will take place at the Cheyenne Mountain Resort on March 17, 2018 - on St. Patrick’s Day and celebrating Catholic Charities 50th Anniversary!

Guests will enjoy a fun evening featuring fine dining, live entertainment, and auctions! This year we are also thrilled to be introducing, "Club St. Pats," for even more after party fun! Proceeds benefit Catholic Charities programs and services. We expect to sell out, so reserve your seat early by calling 719-866-6422 or online at: CCharitiesCC.org/StPatsGala!

Interested in becoming a sponsor? Sponsorships come with a range of recognition and benefits such as a table for 10 at the event as well as print and digital recognition before, during, and after the event.

Contact Sarah Tremmel at 719-866-6440 to become a sponsor.

WALMART FOUNDATION GRANTS CATHOLIC CHARITIES $75,000

At a press conference held at the 8th Street Walmart Supercenter Remodel in September, Catholic Charities was presented with a check for $75,000 for a desperately needed large, refrigerated truck. Walmart Store Manager Martin Lujan and Walmart Regional Manager Jon Ball presented the oversized check to CEO Andy Barton and CDO Sarah Tremmel. Barton said, “This gift will make sure that no one goes hungry in our community.”

STOP BY FOR A TOUCH THE NEED TOUR

Touch the Need Tours of the Marian House complex are scheduled on the first Friday of the month. During this time you will have the incredible opportunity to see all that takes place at the Marian House. Meet our staff and volunteers while experiencing the impact our programs have on our clients. If you are already a donor, see how you are making a difference in our community, and if you are considering donating, this is a great way to see how you can help.

The next tour is scheduled for January 5th, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. If interested in joining us, please RSVP online at CCharitiesCC.org/tours or email Corey Almond at CAlmond@CCharitiesCC.org.

Material Needs:

**Food:** Spoons, ground beef, hot chocolate, spices, canned vegetables

**Infants & Children:** Size 5 & 6 diapers, baby formula, baby food, new baby clothes; Birthday Buddy Bags: $10 gift cards

**Home & Transportation:** Dishes, pots & pans, working vehicles, grocery store and gas gift cards

**Clothing and Essentials:** XL+ sweatshirts and hoodies, Men’s/ women’s underwear, ladies socks, gloves, beanie caps, blankets, razors, shaving cream, and deodorant

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

Volunteer Needs:

Soup Kitchen, Clothing Closet, Family Day Center, Client Services Navigator, Family Mentor Alliance Mentors

Call 719-866-6559 to get involved!

Grateful to our Grantors

El Pomar Foundation Merit Grant
Myron Stratton Foundation
The William & Betty Osborne Trust Fund
Community Leadership Fund
TJX Foundation
US Bank Foundation
Virginia W. Hill Charitable Foundation
Walmart Foundation State Giving Program
T. Rowe Price Foundation
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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Publisher

Catholic Charities of Central Colorado, Inc.
President & CEO - Andy Barton

Editorial Staff

Editor, Writer, Layout - Rochelle Schlortt
Writer, Layout & Photography - Teddi Tostanoski
Circulation - Betsy Finley

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.

Contact Us:

Colorado Springs Office
228 North Cascade Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
T: 719-636-2345
F: 719-636-1216

Castle Rock Office
210 Fifth Street, #100
Castle Rock, CO 80104
T: 720-215-4521

The Marian House
14 West Bijou Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
T: 719-475-7314
F: 719-633-0289

Helen Hunt Campus
917 E. Moreno Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
T: 719-578-1222

www.CCharitiesCC.org
info@CCharitiesCC.org

SUCCESS

to us is helping families transition out of homelessness.

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. To others, it is transitioning their family out of homelessness or learning the skills needed to get a job to 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