

Blessings

A Newsletter of Catholic Charities Southwestern Ohio



An Agency of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati

Introducing the New Blessings Newsletter

A Fresh Look at How We Serve Our Neighbors Across Southwestern Ohio

Welcome to the newly redesigned Blessings, the newsletter of Catholic Charities Southwestern Ohio. As we continue to grow in both mission and impact, we want this publication to reflect the heart of who we are: a community walking together in faith, compassion, and service. Our new format is designed to make it easier for you to see how your generosity transforms lives and how, together, we are building a more hopeful future for our neighbors.

Each year, Catholic Charities Southwestern Ohio serves and empowers over 20,000 people in need across numerous programs. This newsletter gives you a glimpse of this tireless work across four, general service areas: Emergency Assistance & Hunger Relief, Counseling & Family Empowerment, Senior & Caregiver Support, and Migrant & Refugee Services. These categories reflect the full continuum of care we provide across our 11-county region and help tell a clearer story of how Catholic Charities accompanies individuals and families at every stage of their journey.



Students Putting Love into Action!

Students from Romero Academy at Resurrection and Annunciation put their creativity and compassion into action by turning old t-shirts into tote bags for our Food for All pantry recipients. Fourth graders at Resurrection and fifth graders at Annunciation embraced the project with enthusiasm. Their work, guided by Parish and Community Engagement Coordinator Mary Anne Bressler, reflects the spirit of service at the heart of our mission. We are deeply grateful for their generosity and leadership.



LEARN MORE If you are interested in participating with Catholic Charities through works of mercy, contact Mary Anne Bressler at mbressler@ccswoh.org.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE & HUNGER RELIEF

Across our 11-county service area, Catholic Charities provides immediate, compassionate support to individuals and families facing crisis by ensuring access to food, housing, essential resources, and a pathway toward long-term stability.

2025 IMPACT



342,216 total meals served by Food for All in 2025 across ten sites in our rural and urban communities and in schools.



1,924 neighbors received case management and emergency assistance to help stabilize their housing and support their family needs.



MIGRANT & REFUGEE SERVICE

Catholic Charities welcomes families rebuilding their lives to achieve safety, self-sufficiency and hope.

Despite a difficult year in 2025, our Migrant & Refugee Services programs intensified their response to our migrant and refugee brothers and sisters, so they could persevere through hardship, continue building their lives, and strengthen our communities.



2025 IMPACT



1,882 individuals guided through the legal immigration process – a **112%** increase.



462 students enrolled in academic enrichment and English classes – a **133%** increase.



1,545 health consultations provided by Su Casa Hispanic Center – **92%** of clients felt empowered to navigate the healthcare system with confidence.



3,683 clients received language interpretation through AccuracyNow Language Services.

LEADERSHIP

Most Rev. Robert G. Casey,
Archbishop of Cincinnati

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OUR MISSION

Catholic Charities Southwestern Ohio serves and empowers people through God's love in their times of vulnerability. We do so through a full range of local services that engage the community in building solidarity.

OUR VISION

Empowered people, thriving families, and transformed communities encountering God's love everywhere through acts of solidarity.

MISSION ENCOUNTER

Volunteers Propel Our Mission Forward!

Volunteers are the heart of everything Catholic Charities does. They make our programs possible, and right now they are needed to serve in a variety of meaningful ways. Here's how you can make a difference today:

Appointment Drivers: Transport families to their medical or social service appointments and return them home.

Food Pantry Drivers: Transport families to a local food pantry and return them home.

Essential Items Delivery Driver: Deliver food/essential items to family homes.

Su Casa Hispanic Center Volunteers: Assist with health promotion events, data entry, hygiene kit assembly, or Thursday produce distribution.

Caregiver Assistance Network: Facilitate support groups, serve as a peer mentor, or assist individuals with dementia through Creative Connections.



READY TO GET STARTED? Visit ccswoh.volunteerhub.com to explore opportunities and create your volunteer profile. **Questions?** Contact Tonicia Green, Volunteer Coordinator, at 513-672-3836 or tgreen@ccswoh.org.

Employee Spotlight

We are proud to celebrate **Rosa Reyes-Santana**, one of Catholic Charities Southwestern Ohio's bilingual mental health counselors. She was recently featured in the Hispanic Chamber of Cincinnati's Kudos Corner for the profound impact Rosa makes each day and the safe, welcoming space she creates for clients as a bilingual, trauma-informed clinical counselor.

Rosa has been a dedicated member of the Catholic Charities team for 11 years, serving individuals through some of their most challenging moments. Her compassion, cultural understanding, and clinical expertise continue to strengthen our mission and the communities we serve.

Thank you for all your work, Rosa!



You can read the
full feature here

Finding Strength, Healing, and Hope: Tadeo's Journey Forward



When Tadeo first came to Catholic Charities Southwestern Ohio in September 2025, he knew something in his life needed to

change. He joined one of our Anger Management Skills Group classes, hoping to gain better control of his emotions. What he didn't yet realize was that this first step would open the door to a deeper journey of healing, sobriety, and renewed family connection.

By November, Tadeo recognized the need for additional support and completed a one-on-one assessment with our mental health team. During that assessment, his therapist, Margarita Nemesh, saw something remarkable.

"It was wonderful to see that he was already using some of the tools he learned in his anger management class," she shared. "He knew how to put in place self-regulation."

As counseling began, a fuller picture emerged. Tadeo was struggling with alcohol abuse, unresolved anger, and the weight of a complex history of childhood trauma. These challenges were pushing him toward a self-destructive path and threatening the stability of his family. Through

compassionate, trauma-informed therapy, Margarita helped him explore the roots of his pain, understand how past relationships shaped his reactions, and how to embrace a healthier identity grounded in self-awareness and dignity.

Along the way, our Counseling & Family Empowerment team connected Tadeo with Su Casa Hispanic Center for additional support, including food and rental assistance to ensure his family had the stability they needed while he focused on healing.

Today, Tadeo is sober, grounded, and deeply connected to his family.

His relationship with his wife and children is strong, and he is especially attentive and supportive of his child with special needs. He now shares the tools he learned with friends, helping them regulate their emotions and encouraging them to seek therapy when they need it.

Tadeo's story is a powerful reminder that when someone is met with compassion, understanding, and the right support, transformation is possible. His journey reflects the heart of our mission: walking with individuals and families as they move from crisis to stability, and from pain to hope.



2025 IMPACT



655 clients received life improving mental health care through **4,857** sessions.



2,297 children, parents, and care providers received early childhood mental health consultation and parenting education classes.



86% of our Parent Education participants experienced an increase in positive family functioning.

A Heart for Children and a Passion for Learning



When Mrs. Mary Welch joined Catholic Charities Southwestern Ohio's AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent

Program in 2017, she brought with her a deep love for children and a lifelong passion for learning. The Foster Grandparent Program pairs older adults with students who benefit from extra encouragement, academic support, and caring mentorship. Over the years, she has served students of every age, from preschoolers to high schoolers, offering encouragement, stability, and joy to classrooms across our community.

For the past three years, Mrs. Welch has been placed at Central Baptist School, where Principal Donna Hempelmann describes her as nothing short of a "God send." When Principal Hempelmann first arrived at the school, resources were limited and there was no budget for extra enrichment opportunities. Then came Mrs. Welch.

Seeing a need, Mrs. Welch took it upon herself to create a school library from the ground up. She organized the space, stocked shelves, and reached out to the community for book donations. Her passion for reading quickly became contagious. "She was full of creativity, determination, and heart," shared Principal Hempelmann.

That library exists today because of Mrs. Welch's belief that once a child learns to read, their world opens up. It gives them the tools to explore, imagine, and express their feelings.

But Mrs. Welch didn't stop there.

She also launched a student puppeteer program, giving children the chance to write their own stories and bring them to life on stage. Through this creative outlet, students discovered new ways to express themselves, collaborate, and build confidence.

Her love of the arts extends to music as well. Mrs. Welch has been teaching students about classical music through books and storytelling, an effort that, thanks to generous donations, culminated in a special trip last spring to a performance at the Cincinnati Museum Center. For many

students, it was their first experience with live classical music.

Beyond the classroom, Mrs. Welch continues to share her gifts. She collects puppets and even performed at the Foster Grandparent Program's newly created annual talent show this summer, delighting fellow volunteers and staff.

Mrs. Welch's service is a beautiful example of what happens when one person shares their passion with others. Through books, music, creativity, and compassion, she has enriched the lives of countless children, and inspired a school community to dream bigger.

Her story reminds us that the simplest acts of love can create lasting change.



2025 IMPACT



79,000

hours of service were provided by Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions.



416

clients were served by the Caregiver Assistance Network.



93%

of Caregivers reported reduced stress thanks to our programs.

Want to Help? If you're interested in volunteering as a Foster Grandparent, please contact Florence McCray, Program Assistant, at 513-672-3732 or fmccray@ccswoh.org.



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**"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall
obtain mercy." (Matthew 5:7)**



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Rising Together to Empower Local Families



CATHOLIC CHARITIES SOUTHWESTERN OHIO helps nearly
24,000 people a year move from crisis to stability and self-
sufficiency.

We do this by providing a wide range of vital services, including food
assistance, counseling, education, job development, and support.
Our services are unique, professional, and effective in changing lives
and helping families thrive.

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