

Providing Help.
Creating Hope.



kNOw POVERTY



LEARN.



ACT.



CONNECT.



PRAY.

Catholic Charities Hosted **FIRST** Poverty Summit

We urged Houstonians to know poverty and understand its impact in our region on January 29 when we hosted our first kNOw Poverty Summit. Held at the University of St. Thomas, this event highlighted how, by working together, poverty can be eliminated one person at a time.

"We wanted to share with Houstonians how poverty affects everyone in our community and all communities, and how everyone can make a difference by acknowledging this issue," said Cynthia Colbert, MSW, Catholic Charities president/CEO. "To do this, we demonstrated firsthand the day-to-day realities of life with a shortage of money and an abundance of stress through a simulation, in order for attendees to experience the full picture. It was very powerful and we know it will create change."

During the simulation, participants role-played the lives of low-income families, from single parents trying to care for their children to senior citizens trying to maintain their self-sufficiency on Social Security. Doing this enabled participants to view poverty from different angles and the words "frustrated" and "overwhelmed" were on the lips of participants after an hour of being "poor."

The summit, which was underwritten by CHI St. Luke's Health, featured opening comments and prayer by Archbishop Joseph A. Fiorenza and a keynote presentation by Dr. Stephen Klineberg, professor of sociology at Rice University, best known for his "Kinder Institute Houston Area Survey." Attendees were also able to hear a panel discussion featuring Anna Babin, president and CEO of United Way of Greater Houston, Dr. Robert Sanborn, president and CEO of Children at Risk, and Cynthia Colbert.

We are grateful to our partners and attendees and we look forward to hosting the 2016 Poverty Summit!

Our city's poverty rate is at least 22 percent, with more than one million people living in poverty in the Greater Houston area. That's one of every five men, women and children. Poverty is about not having enough money to meet basic needs, but in our work at Catholic Charities, we see daily that poverty is about more than just money. The World Bank describes the far-reaching effects of poverty in this way:

"Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time."

On a dollars-and-cents basis, in 2014 the federal government defined poverty as annual income up to \$11,670 for one person and \$23,850 for a household of four. The current Texas minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour. To put that in perspective, a full-time minimum

wage employee earns \$15,080 annually. Even those fortunate enough to find full-time employment may find themselves barely scraping by in our city of prosperity.

We also know that hunger and poverty often go hand in hand. In the 2014 Kinder Institute Houston Area Survey, 16 percent of Houstonians reported having trouble keeping food on the table.

The Houston Food Bank reports that on any given day, 66,200 people in our area have no food at all – and 5,000 of those are children.

For 72 years, Catholic Charities has provided help and created hope for thousands of people. In 2015, we know there will be new challenges in the community but we will continue the work of alleviating poverty for children, families, immigrants and refugees, and seniors. We can lose sight of that hope if we look at statistics all day, but that is why we focus on eliminating poverty face by face and helping each person become self-sufficient. In Pope Francis' words, "I would say that we should not consider this state of things as irreversible... Let us try and build a society and an economy where man and his welfare are at the center, instead of money." We don't want to just give a hand-out, we want to give people a hand-up. We continue to see clients graduate, get jobs, live independently and thrive. Thank you for helping us ensure that in our city of opportunity, no one that comes to our door is left on the outskirts of hope.

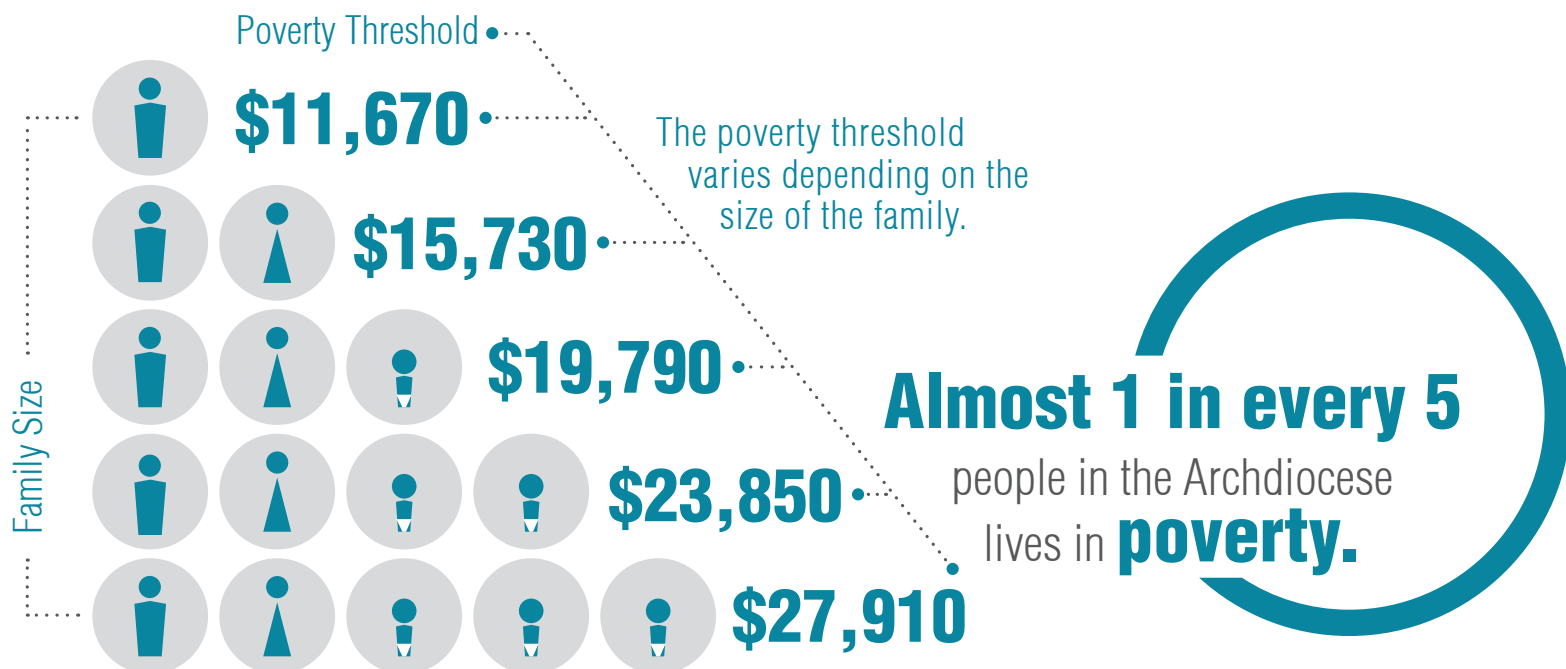


Cynthia N. Colbert, MSW

In the Peace of Christ,

Cynthia N. Colbert

Cynthia N. Colbert, MSW
President/CEO





Catholic Charities' A Cardinal's Christmas Luncheon Raises \$256,000

Children and parents celebrated the true meaning of Christmas with Cardinal DiNardo

His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo shared the true meaning of Christmas, December 13, with more than 300 Houstonians at the sixth annual A Cardinal's Christmas luncheon. The River Oaks Country Club roared to life with excited children clad in their holiday finest to capture the moment with a family photo with the Cardinal.

A Cardinal's Christmas, a non-commercialized family holiday event, raised more than \$256,000 to benefit Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston's Children and Family Services. Event Chairs Laura Robertson and Alison Coriell and Underwriting Chair Elizabeth Hussein said that they thoughtfully selected the theme "Teaching the Value of Giving" because each of them tries to impart that value to their own small children.

Long-standing Catholic Charities supporters Roseann Rogers, Deana Blackburn, Blanche Morello, Michelle Herrera, David Harvey, Jr., and Carol and John Kafka attended the event with their families. Young musicians from The Regis School of the Sacred Heart's Bell Choir and the St. Michael Catholic School's Choir performed Christmas selections.

Animals from the nativity were used in the hand-painted centerpieces, cookies generously donated by Paulie's, and special coloring books created by event Co-Chair Alison Coriell illustrated the theme for the luncheon's littlest guests. The highlight of the afternoon's festivities came when Cardinal DiNardo invited the children to gather around him as he shared a story that emphasized selflessness, love and the importance of giving to others. Keepsake mementos of hand-carved olive wood ornaments from Bethlehem and delicious Sprinkles Cupcakes were presented to guests as they departed.

Thank You for
Responding to
Scanlan Foundation's
Christmas Appeal
Challenge Grant!

Central Appeal
\$360,277

Fort Bend Appeal
\$32,896
**to benefit Fort Bend clients*

Galveston Appeal
\$2,445
**to benefit Southern region clients*

Scanlan Match
\$110,000

Share Your Blessings — Christmas Giving Program A Success!

Every year the generosity of this community seems to increase tenfold. It is truly incredible to see how many families are impacted each year by the generous hearts that live, work and serve in our city. The giving season kicked off this year with its 21st successful Share Your Blessings (SYB), which served over 5,300 individuals in the month of December. Contributions came in from nearly 30 parishes and Catholic schools from the Archdiocese. The end result was thanks to the more than 350 volunteers who came to our aid and contributed over 550 hours to sort and distribute toys! The program received \$35,170, over 8,000 gifts, and the equivalent of \$12,870 in volunteer hours.

Thanks to SYB Co-Chairs Chuck Gremillion and Bill Neeson, this Christmas program grew and we were able to serve more people. The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston has always been a wonderful place to call home, but we can assure you all of the families you helped this holiday season have never been more thankful to live in this community. Thank you for ALL you do to help alleviate poverty and give hope to our families in need each and every year by supporting them with Christmas joy!



60 Employees from CHI St. Luke's Donate Their Time

During Christmas time we usually have one-time volunteers and corporate groups come to volunteer with one of our programs as they give back to the community, and we would like to "Spotlight" one of those groups. We are grateful for the more than 60 employees from CHI St. Luke's Health who donated their time to help sort donated toys, bag toys for families and distribute to our clients. Their time and donations of toys and gift cards allowed the Share Your Blessings program to increase its capacity to reach hundreds of families during the Christmas holiday. We thank you for your commitment to service!



Pictured Above: Group of employees from CHI St. Luke's that volunteered to help sort, bag and tag at the SYB warehouse.

CREATIVE Aging

in Fort Bend County



HEALTH, EDUCATION & THE ARTS

The Mamie George Community Center (MGCC) is focused on improving quality of life. As life expectancy increases, more attention is being given to the meaning and purpose of later life. So we created a program that aims to meet the developmental needs of older people through creative engagement and self-expression.

Many of us intrinsically know that the arts help improve our mental and physical state, often alleviating feelings of depression, anxiety, and isolation. Research is showing that older adults who participate in art programs have fewer doctor visits and lower healthcare costs, use less medication, experience a lower rate of depression, and even have fewer risk factors for entering a nursing home!

The Creative Aging Program at MGCC has opened its doors to seniors who have never had the means to participate in art programs so they can reap the benefits of this research. This program combines health, education and the arts for seniors. The program promotes health and life long learning through the arts and encourages social interaction, community service, physical activity and personal enrichment. Opportunities include drama, dance, yoga, music and art classes daily.

"Our goal is to encourage a strong sense of meaning and purpose and to promote healthy living and more vital communities," said Beth Zarate, MGCC executive director. "Since we began offering art every day, we have noticed the social

interaction, health and attitudes of our seniors improve. The arts are enhancing the center's climate and community involvement."

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Keeping the art studio filled with enough art supplies to support 600 seniors per month is the biggest challenge. We recruit volunteers to help organize supply drives, submit our wish list to individuals and companies who can help, and also seniors lead activities to create artwork that can be sold to help raise money. Stop by the center to bid on our artwork of the week! All art sales help support the Creative Aging Program at MGCC. Call 281.202.6200 for details.

Art Studio Wish List

Projector and screen	Watercolor paper
Gift Cards from Hobby Lobby & Michael's	Prang watercolor sets
9 x 12 inch canvases	Die cutters- leafs and flowers
Acrylic paints- multi surface and/or full body- all colors appreciated!	Scrapbooking paper/card stock—assorted colors
Golden Tylon brushes—assorted sizes	Bisque ceramics (cases of 10 oz mugs, small bowls and plates)
Paint pens, sharpies	Ready-made frames—standard sizes 8x10 to 24x36

DID YOU KNOW?

Houston has topped the nation in the number of refugee resettlements for the past two years.

At the end of 2013, there were 16.7 million refugees worldwide according to The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Fifty percent of them were under the age of 18. In all, the United States takes in 70,000 refugees from around the world each year, which is more than all other nations combined. Texas has been the State Department's top pick to resettle refugees, with about 7,200 of the nation's 70,000 refugees coming to our state last year. More than 2,000 of those refugees are served in Houston by local resettlement agencies.

Our Refugee Resettlement staff speaks 30 languages collectively! From picking our clients up at the airport to helping them with employment, our case workers equip refugees with the necessary tools to become self-sufficient. Within 30 days of arrival, we must help our families and individuals to: apply for food stamps; apply for Medicaid benefits; obtain medical assessment; obtain their

social security card; enroll in English and cultural orientation classes; and enroll their children for school.

Every week, new refugees from war-torn parts of the world arrive in our city. We can only imagine the horrific things they have seen and experienced. This is why your support is so critical, and why we want to thank you for helping us in 2014 to welcome more than 600 refugees who have fled their homes due to violence, persecution, and inescapable poverty. We welcomed refugees from Iraq, Congo, Somalia, Cuba, Burma, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Syria and Iran. In addition, we served 175 Cuban Haitian clients that were received from USCCB and 664 Cuban border crossers who walked into our building.

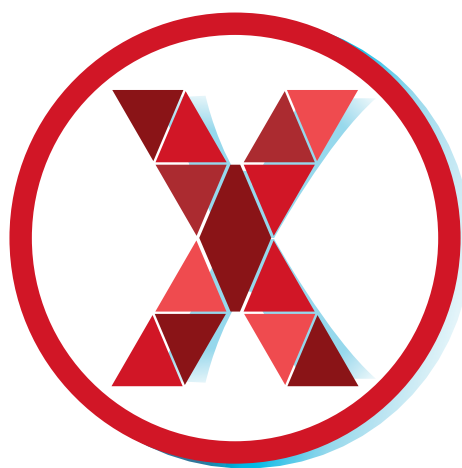
You have made it possible for us to welcome these individuals and families with dignity, love and support. The essence of our work is described in Pope John Paul II's message for World Migration

Day 2000: "The Church hears the suffering cry of all who are uprooted from their own land, of families forcefully separated, of those who, in the rapid changes of our day, are unable to find a stable home anywhere. She senses the anguish of those without rights, without any security, at the mercy of every kind of exploitation, and she supports them in their unhappiness."

As we welcome new families, there is always the need to replenish our resources. Furniture, kitchenware, baby items, bed linens and more will help us create Welcome Kits for our newly arriving refugees.

We are also in need of volunteers. Here is a list of areas where you or a friend could help:

- Intern in the following program areas: Reception & Placement, Intensive Case Management, Self-Sufficiency, English Language Training and Housing.
- Interpreters that speak: Spanish, Burmese, Arabic, Karen, Nepali, Urdu, Farsi, or Tigrinya
- Drivers to take refugees to social service, health department, medical, and job appointments
- Help set up apartments for new arrivals
- Shop for essentials (housekeeping products) for new arrivals
- Pick up furniture donations
- Mentor an individual or family
- Teach clients to ride the bus
- Enroll refugee children in school
- Organize donation drives (hygiene items, clothes, etc.)
- Coach clients studying for the citizenship test



Mark Your Calendars

Mamie George Community
Center Pancake Festival
Saturday, February 28

All you can eat pancakes from
7 a.m. to 7 p.m. for only \$5!

1111 Collins Road,
Richmond, TX 77469

Please consider donating canned
or dry food to help those in need
who come to our food pantry.

For more information, please
contact Sade Jackson at
281.202.6254.

Advocacy Day
Tuesday, March 24

His Eminence Daniel Cardinal
DiNardo has set a goal of
sending 350 individuals from
the Archdiocese to participate in
Advocacy Day, 2015. Participants
from dioceses throughout the
state will advocate on behalf of
the Texas Bishops on March 24
at the state house in Austin. It is
a legislative year, and, as always,
it is essential that the Catholic
voice is heard.

Six buses will depart from Houston
that morning. This event is free
of charge to all who attend. All
participants will receive a T-shirt
and lunch. You and your parish
are encouraged to join us! Please
support the Texas Catholic Bishops
2015 Legislative Agenda by
participating in or promoting this
important event at your parish.

For more information, please
contact Matthew Johns at
713.874.6659 or
mjohns@catholiccharities.org.

CONCERT at the VILLA



Concert at the Villa
Sunday, April 19

This intimate concert is presented
by Catholic Charities in memory
of the many loved ones lost to
HIV/AIDS and in honor of those
whose efforts have sustained
those affected by the disease.
Catholic Charities' HIV/AIDS
Ministry offers compassionate
care to men, women, children
and families affected by HIV
and AIDS. Though counseling,
financial assistance and spiritual
support, Catholic Charities helps
its clients, regardless of race or
religion, achieve self-sufficiency
and live with dignity. The
event will feature a Mass of
Remembrance, High Tea, and
then a passionate performance
by a renowned artist at the Sisters
of Charity of the Incarnate Word
Villa de Matel Chapel. Please join
us for this rare opportunity to
celebrate mass in this beautiful
Neo-Byzantine Chapel, which
is widely acclaimed as the most
beautiful chapel in Texas.

Villa De Matel, 6510 Lawndale
Street, Houston, TX 77023

For more information, please
contact Zarinah K. Poole,
director of special events:
713.874.6649 or
zpoole@catholiccharities.org.

MISSION OF



Mamie George
Community Center Gala
Thursday, May 7

Heaven on Earth, 300 Douglas
Lane, Missouri City, TX 77489

For more information, please
contact Beth Zarate, executive
director of the
Mamie George Community
Center, 281.202.6240 or
bzarate@catholiccharities.org.

Visit our website for a complete
list of events with details:
CatholicCharities.org/Events

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bbbhouston.org

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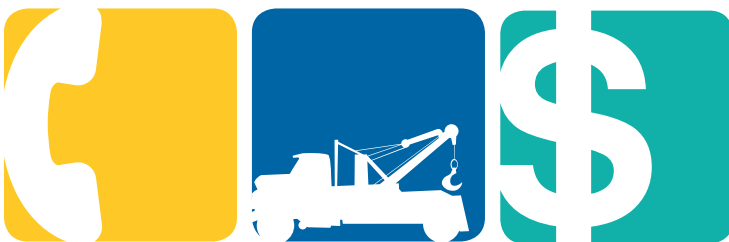
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**92¢ of every
\$1 donated
goes directly to
Programs and
Client Services.**

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston VEHICLE DONATION PROGRAM



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866.915.GIVE (4483) seven days a week.

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We will tow your vehicle at no cost to you.

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