

20 years with immigration services have been a gift from God 10
Live longer and enjoy it more 11

CATHOLIC CHARITIES Connections

SUPPLEMENT TO ARKANSAS CATHOLIC • CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF ARKANSAS • 2415 N. TYLER ST. • LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72207 • JUNE 15, 2019

AT A GLANCE Catholic Charities of Arkansas serves

■ **Adoption Services:** Birth parent services, adoptive family services and search and reunion

■ **Immigration in Northwest Arkansas:** Family-based legal assistance, domestic violence and crime victims services, refugee resettlement, naturalization services, education and advocacy, legal assistance with applications for DACA

■ **Immigration in Little Rock:** Family-based legal assistance, legal assistance with applications for DACA, naturalization services, and education and advocacy

■ **Parish social ministries:** Parish-based ministry development, disaster recovery, family assistance, Catholic Campaign for Human Development, legislative advocacy, Catholic Charities Summer Institute

■ **Westside Free Medical Clinic:** Medical and dermatology clinics for noninsured adults, outreach and community education

■ **Prison Ministry:** Acts as liaison between public authorities and the diocese, recruits and supports volunteer prison ministers for county, state and federal facilities

■ **Development:** Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Golf Classic, Catholic Relief Services Rice Bowl and St. Nicholas Partners

FOR MORE INFORMATION
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CATHOLIC CHARITIES' MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Catholic Charities of Arkansas of the Diocese of Little Rock is rooted in the challenge of the Gospel: To serve persons who are poor or marginalized; to advocate on behalf of the most vulnerable; and to actively promote charity, justice and the sanctity of life in the Church and the community.

Disaster recovery gins up in Arkansas

Catholic Charities on hand to help tornado, flood victims

Catholic Charities has been helping with two Arkansas natural disasters, the Arkansas River flood and the May 8 tornado in Pine Bluff.

The Pine Bluff tornado was rated as an EF-1. It struck a neighborhood several blocks from St. Joseph Church, damaging a few homes and an apartment complex. In the complex, 71 apartments were initially evacuated because of the damage. Most of the residents were soon able to return.

Catholic Charities executive director Patrick Gallaher and a disaster case management volunteer, Tracy Eichenberger Evans, have been working to obtain assistance for the 16 families who were not able to return to their homes.

Catholic Charities participates as a member of the Arkansas Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (ARVOAD) to help with recovery efforts after disasters. ARVOAD has been instrumental in aiding the survivors of the Pine Bluff tornado. Within a short period of time, all of the unmet needs of the 16 families will be met and they will return to a new normal.

The Arkansas River flood is still unfolding, as of publication time. Parishes the length of the



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After floodwater recedes, families with damaged homes and business are faced with daunting cleanup and navigating insurance, state and federal assistance programs to rebuild their lives. This couple moves flood-damaged belongings out of their home in Houston, Texas, after Hurricane Harvey in August 2017.

Arkansas River will be involved in meeting the immediate needs of parishioners and community members alike. Communities like Fort Smith are coming together to

meet the challenges of this historic event and will keep it from becoming a catastrophe.

Gallaher said, "Catholic Charities is standing by to respond to

requests for immediate needs from the parishes and is working diligently with ARVOAD partners to take part in the long-term recovery effort."

Right-to-death bill could show up in state legislature

In January, during this past legislative session, a state representative introduced a bill that would have allowed a physician to prescribe a fatal dose of drugs for a patient to use to commit suicide.

The bill was strongly opposed and failed to receive even a motion for a vote in the committee.

This action in Arkansas runs counter to a disturbing trend in our country and, indeed, among nations in the west. The proponents of physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia, both forms of physician-assisted death, are aggressively pursuing changes in



From the Director
Patrick Gallaher

homicide laws to legalize the medical killing of patients.

Those pushing physician-assisted death argue that if there is a right to life, then surely there must be a right to death. The bumper sticker logic of this view is seductive, but wrong. There is a right to life, the gift of God,

a good of the natural law, and acknowledged in the Declaration of Independence.

But no right to death is recognized in the Judeo-Christian tradition or in more than 700 years of Anglo-American common law. In 1997, the Supreme Court of the United States held unanimously

that there was no constitutionally protected liberty interest giving an individual the right to choose a physician-assisted death. There is no right to death.

In Europe and North America, when laws have been proposed to allow for the decriminalization of homicide to permit physician-assisted death, the main supporting argument is to allow for the merciful death of cancer patients experiencing excruciating, unbearable, unremitting pain that cannot be eliminated by other medical treatment.

In practice, in every jurisdic-

tion where physician-assisted death has been lawfully permitted, the percentage of cancer patients falls among those killed and is rapidly replaced by patients suffering from behavioral issues, such as depression. Often, conditions for which patients are killed are not even imminently fatal.

The right-to-die movement, like the abortion movement, argues in terms of personal choice.

But as with abortion, the right to die in actuality becomes a duty to die felt by the patient. Rather

As with abortion, the right to die in actuality becomes a duty to die felt by the patient.

See DEATH page 10

God's gift to me in Springdale

20 years of walking with our Catholic immigration clients

BY FRANK HEAD

Some things happen in life that appear to be random but later seem to have been inevitable. Twenty years ago, I answered an ad by Catholic Charities Immigration Services in Springdale and, in August 1999, I was hired to run the place.

Twenty years later, three of the four women in that office are still there, providing low-cost legal services to immigrants. Four more joined them over the years to wield an amazing combination of intellect, compassion, humor and humility with a single purpose: living Jesus' commandment to love thy neighbor as thyself. The eight core crew are now assisted by volunteers, contract workers and pro-bono attorneys to offer an unparalleled service to God.

In Arkansas, thousands of immigrants from all over the world — men, women and children — live as our neighbors, yet are deprived of the rights, protections and privileges we ourselves take for granted. The Founding Fathers of America established a constitutional principle that a stable democracy could only be established if the laws applied equally to all. Historically, many laws in early America protected only men and exclusively white men at that. But eventually in the American Great Experiment, principle prevailed over personal greed and equality under the law took root. Women and blacks were given the right to vote and the Supreme Court ruled that non-citizens were entitled to the same protections as citizens.



Arkansas Catholic file

Frank Head answered a help-wanted ad in 1999 that put him on a path to celebrating 20 years with an "upstart bunch of Catholic women" and clients of Catholic Charities Immigration Services in Springdale.

Again the idea is that if one of us is enslaved, none can be free.

In the 1990s, this upstart bunch of Catholic women in Springdale took it upon themselves to read immigration law, study obscure departmental memos and spend hundreds of hours applying their learning to help their immigrant neighbors complete the obscure governmental forms that might eventually let those families live out their lives without the threat of jail and deportation. Immigration law has a special provision allowing trained non-lawyers to provide representation.

Two decades later, by 2019, these seven women had so impressed individuals, attorneys, judges and federal agencies that our office receives almost \$250,000 annually in financial support. Each of those women averages four appointments a day, 1,000 neighbors a year, 20,000 good deeds in two decades by listening to one family at a time and recommending legal solutions.

Back in 1999, Catholic Charities Immigration office was in the second floor of the historic St. Raphael Church in Springdale. There were five of us and we had priests, nuns and Franciscan brothers working nearby. We attended daily Mass, adoration chapel and benefited from many more aspects of Catholic' religious life.

As the years went by, we outgrew the space and moved down the street. Personal demands on everyone's lives increased: from ailing spouses and parents to growing children with schedules. Our numbers and our outreach expanded through collaborations with other non-profits to all parts of Arkansas, which meant we were rarely all following the same routine at the same time. But for me, those two decades will always be God's gift to me: a Catholic home place to serve and a work family to do it with.

Frank Head is the director of Catholic Immigration Services-Springdale.

home and are confronting fertility issues or are called to adopt."

Through the sale of Arkansas' Choose Life license plates, Catholic Adoptions is given a grant each year and allocates part of the funds for advertising.

"We are using this money to create and support ad campaigns that encourage people to think and learn about adoption," Jones said. "We support Arkansas Right to Life in their TV ad campaign every year, which focuses on educating about adoption and offers birthmothers a helpful phone number to get more information about local services."

As another way to reach younger women, Catholic Adoptions Services is currently advertising on Snapchat, a social media platform used primarily by teens and young adults. According to re-

LEGAL EDUCATION

From May 27 to 31, members of Catholic Charities' immigration offices in Little Rock and Springdale attended professional training through the Catholic Legal Immigration Inc. (CLINIC) annual Convening in Pittsburgh, Pa. Little Rock director Jennifer Verkamp-Ruthven was joined by Karla Campalans of the Little Rock office as well as Mariae Acosta-Westbrook, Laura Awakim, Alma Beltran and Elizabeth Schaeuffler from the Springdale office. They took part in continuing legal education training that will assist with certification as accredited representatives.

PRISON MINISTRY

Father Phillip Reaves has begun his duties as the full-time director of prison ministry for the Diocese of Little Rock. Father Reaves has an office in The McDonald Center at St. John Center in Little Rock and coordinates the prison ministry throughout the diocese in the federal and state prisons and county jails.

BRIEFS



Father Phillip Reaves

SUMMER ENVELOPE

A pre-addressed envelope printed in blue ink is enclosed in many copies of this issue of *Arkansas Catholic*. Donations to Catholic Charities are used exclusively to assist those who come to the Little Rock office with some sort of financial challenge.

permits the gift of life to be embraced, recognizing that life must be protected and respected. This is the natural cycle: we come from God and return to God.

Physician-assisted death is unnatural and inherently evil. It must be opposed and must not

be allowed to insinuate itself into our culture as something that is acceptable. We must prepare to oppose the return of proposals to legalize physician-assisted death in the next general assembly.

Death

Continued from page 9

than a refuge from unendurable suffering, the patient decides to die out of a sense of duty to family and emotional burdens. As with abortion, physician-assisted death is a tool of convenience used by the patient as an element of control to avoid disability before death.

At the end of life, palliative care and the support of family and faith allow for the acceptance of a natural death. This

At the end of life, palliative care and the support of family and faith allow for the acceptance of a natural death.

Patrick Gallaher is the executive director of Catholic Charities of Arkansas.

Getting the word out: We can help

Catholic Adoption Services uses social media to inform younger people

Catholic Adoption Services is using its Choose Life Adoption Assistance Program grant to reach out to the local community to let women know that services are available to them.

The agency offers child placement services to both birthparents and potential adoptive families. They help match birthparents with families and provide support to both through the entire adoption process and afterwards.

"We are always pushing ourselves to reach out to the community in support of adoption and to share how much it can help everyone involved," adoptions specialist Rebecca Jones said. "Adoption answers the challenge a woman faces who doesn't feel ready to be a parent. It also assists families who want to add a child to their

cent statistics, 69 percent of 13-17 year olds and 68 percent of 18-29 year olds use Snapchat.

The office also promotes its programs through Catholic Charities' Facebook page and with print advertising in *Arkansas Catholic*. The office will also be publishing brochures and posters for parishes and pregnancy resource centers.

"We are pleased that we are able to communicate with the Catholic community," Jones said. "We ask you to think about adoption in your community and to consider ways to share more about adoption. The more people know about this great service, the more people we can reach to help."

Catholic Adoption Services in Little Rock is placing ads like this (at right) on Snapchat to reach a younger demographic, ages 13 to 29 years.



Take some old-fashioned steps for longer healthy life

Decrease fatty, sugary foods and add more walking to your day

BY KAREN DIPIPPA
DIRECTOR, WESTSIDE FREE MEDICAL CLINIC

On a visit to the CHI St. Vincent Infirmary, one can see large signs indicating the stairs. The signs are most needed because the stairs in these buildings are in obscure locations around the corner from the elevators. The signs include little quotes such as “one pair of tennis shoes is good for 500 miles.”

Along the path to the hospital, walking distance markers are evident. There was a time before our modern conveniences that walking and taking the stairs to a destination were the only paths to take. While modern medicine has successfully combatted many of the life-threatening conditions in those pre-modern times, increasing lifespan for each succeeding generation, people may have been healthier overall with lifestyle choices. Actually, there were not choices but usually the only way of life.

Here are some other ways we could step to better health:



unsplash.com

Park a few blocks away and get in a healthy walk to your destination.

■ **Food choices:** Through much of our history, cultivating one’s own food and fresh fruit and vegetables, including fresh farm eggs with the occasional home-produced protein, seemed to avert an increasing present day condition: diabetes.

Studies have shown new immigrants increase their chance of diabetes and cardiovascular disease when adopting the typical American lifestyle. Some immigrant populations have genetic markers increasing the likelihood of diabetes, but the typical U.S. lifestyle ac-

celerates both the condition and the serious consequences of lack of treatment or poorly managed treatment.

■ **Walking more:** No one wants to return to the days of cholera and tuberculosis, but we could rethink what our modern conveniences have created. Most of us, especially in Arkansas, lack the public transportation sufficient to direct us to our destinations so we need to drive vehicles. That takes quite a few of the steps out of built-in exercise like walking to public transportation or walking city

blocks to our chosen destination. In larger cities, buses, subways and transfers create these built-in steps to get from one means to another.

■ **Portion sizes:** Our portions of food have increased significantly also meaning we are consuming a greater number of calories with less activity. Being mindful of our portions alone could make a big difference in our daily intake. While farm families made most everything from scratch, we now have processed foods which, while convenient, are clearly not as nutritious and, in some cases, just plain bad for our health.

■ **Exercise programs at work:** Employers could take one step further, particularly in the exercise realm and allow paid time for exercise. This would result in healthier workers and savings in the employer’s health care costs. Employees working full time and raising families do not always have the luxury of adding exercise outside the sedentary office.

Until employers add this healthy life choice as a benefit, take a tip from the CHI St. Vincent Infirmary: lace up your shoes and take the stairs. A few steps can make a big difference in your health.

Every day is Earth Day: Care for God’s creation

In light of climate change, we could protect our natural resources in our choice of food and how it is packaged.

Locally farmed foods are more ecological than transporting foods from across the globe and country. Being mindful of how our purchased foods are packaged could also go a long way to protect our natural resources. For instance, plastics are extremely hard to decompose while bamboo breaks down and is quick to grow.

Recent news of the plastics in our oceans reflects our overuse of single-use water bottles and plastic straws. Think how you can make a difference just by not using plastic straws and by using reusable beverage containers.

Next steps might entail consuming less red meat to save the planet.

We have a Catholic obligation to protect the natural world. Let’s keep Earth Day all year to stem the tide.

— Karen DiPippa

Westside Free Medical Clinic
a ministry of Catholic Charities of Arkansas

Volunteers Needed

**Spanish-speaking
Diabetes Educator**

in clinic, schedule to be determined

Registered Nurses

2-3 hours monthly or per your schedule



Can you share some time?

Contact Karen DiPippa, 501-664-0340 ext. 356, or e-mail kdippa@dolr.org



Volunteers Needed

Interviewing, office help, sorting donations, preparing grocery bags, collecting donations, and general maintenance



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501-372-4388 Cash donations welcome

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St. Luke’s congregation is growing and their current older building can no longer accommodate them.

IT’S OUR MISSION

The missionary spirit is alive in Arkansas. But how can you support missions closer to home?



One Church invests each year in a rural mission in our diocese that needs a leg up to become a thriving community.

**2018-2019 Partner:
St. Luke Church
Warren**

Please pray for this project and give today.

To give or for more information:
dolr.org/one-church
Catholic Charities of Arkansas
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