

# Sharing God's love in the community for 80 years



Traci Kennedy



Chris Goebel

Catholic Charities is blessed to have an 80-year tradition of answering God's call to serve the most vulnerable with dignity and respect. From our earliest days of caring for children at St. Joseph's Home and providing adoption services to our current work of feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless and abused, and enriching the lives of many, we strive to see the God-given value of each person we serve.

Since Bishop C.H. Winklemann formed the Catholic Charities Bureau in 1943, we have been honored to serve as the social services arm of the Diocese of Wichita.

We are truly grateful for the financial support the Diocese provides us each year, which covers approximately 10 percent of our operating budget. Likewise, we recognize how blessed we are to have tremendous support from community philanthropists as well as private and public foundations that provide 90 percent of our operating budget.

In addition, our volunteers gave 12,541 hours of their time, valued at \$375,603, to supplement the work of our staff. Community partners and individuals provided gifts in-kind that totaled \$1.1 million. We could not serve 13,000 people without this support.

As we look to the future and begin the first of our next 80 years, our board of directors is developing a new strategic plan to serve as our roadmap. No matter which direction that map leads us, two things are certain: First, we will continue to preserve the human dignity of each person we serve, loving them as does God. Second, we will not forget that it is only through our generous supporters that we are able to do our work.

Gratefully,  
*Traci*  
Traci Kennedy  
Executive Director  
Catholic Charities – Diocese of Wichita

*Christopher*  
Christopher Goebel  
Chair, Catholic Charities Board of Directors  
Chairman/CEO, Star Lumber

# 80 years of answering His call

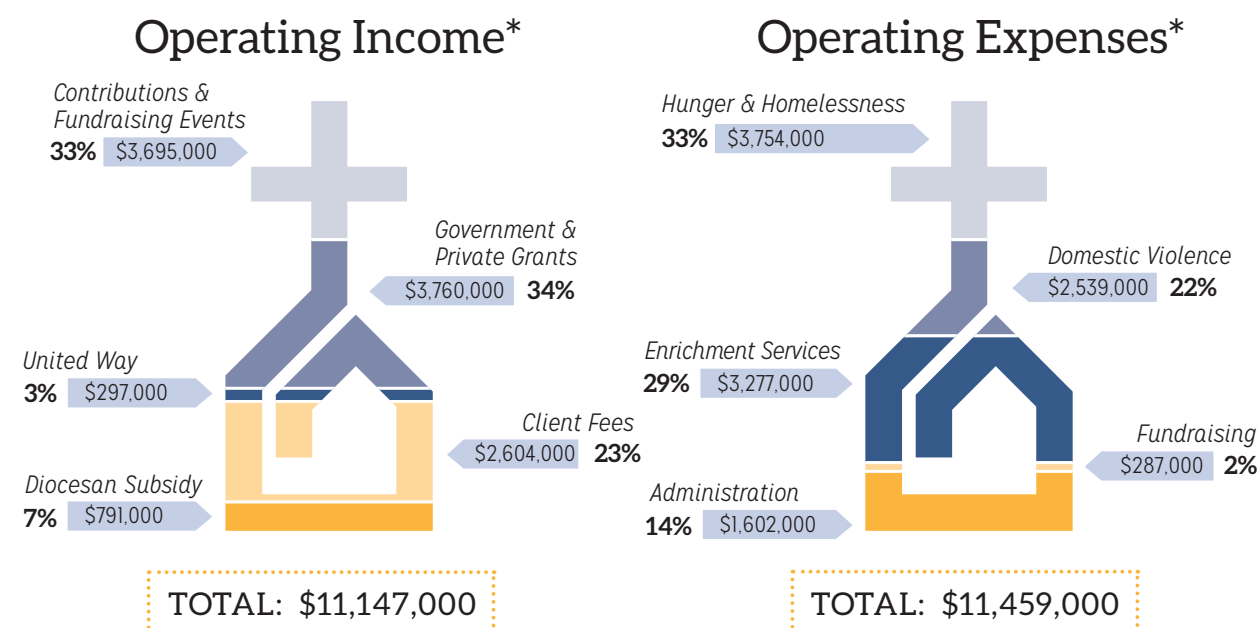
## CATHOLIC CHARITIES 2023 COMMUNITY REPORT

Since 1943, people in the community have come together to respond to God's call to serve the most vulnerable among us through Catholic Charities. With the support of donors, partners, volunteers and staff who share in the work of Catholic Charities, we have touched countless lives throughout the Diocese of Wichita through a variety of programs that best address the needs of the community.

Today, our ministries focus on hunger and homelessness, domestic violence and enrichment services.

The work of Catholic Charities has always been rooted in Catholic social teachings, especially those which focus on the life and dignity of each person, especially the poor or vulnerable. While rooted in our Catholic values, we willingly serve all people, regardless of their faith or religious beliefs, or lack there of.

Catholic Charities could not fulfill our mission without the generous support of our donors. One hundred percent of this financial support stays within the 25 counties that comprise the Diocese of Wichita to help neighbors in need.



\*From unaudited financial reports. Figures have been rounded.



*"I learned that I don't need to be dependent on anyone else or drugs. Happiness comes from me."*

**SHEALA**, SAFE PROJECT AND HARBOR HOUSE CLIENT



**63 veteran families** provided with case management at Supportive Services for Veteran Families

*"It was a lot, but I was determined. Lauren [with SSVF] has been a God-send; she has been amazing. I have vented to her, received support from her."*

**AMANDA**, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VETERAN FAMILIES CLIENT

# Sal shines at Adult Day Services

*"We have more than we dreamed, more than what was expected for him. We are so grateful. We think he is enjoying his life."*

Once the smallest baby ever born at Wesley Medical Center, Salatiel "Sal" Esparza is now one of the biggest personalities at Adult Day Services.

In 2000, Angelica Esparza was carrying twins when her water broke just 16 weeks into her pregnancy. She recalls that doctors advised her to terminate the pregnancy or "you will have a tough life with him." Angelica and her husband, Salatiel, chose to continue the pregnancy. She was able to hold Sal and his twin brother in utero for another five weeks before delivering them at just 21 weeks. Sadly, his twin did not survive.

Sal weighed just one pound at birth, and had a host of health conditions due to his premature birth, including cerebral palsy. He spent five months in the neonatal intensive care unit at Wesley before going home.

Doctors continued to paint a grim picture for Sal, Angelica says. They said that he would never eat normally. He did use a feeding tube for nearly four years, but has been on solid foods ever since. They also said he would never walk. So, Angelica tied his little legs to hers

with sheets and walked with him so he could learn. Today he uses crutches to aid his mobility.

"I don't feel like it has been a tough life with him at all," says Angelica, who has been Sal's vocal advocate all his life. "I'm not going to let anyone treat him like he is no one."

After graduating from Wichita South High School, Sal continued his education for a time at Levy Special Education Center. The 23-year-old has been a participant at Adult Day Services for about a year.

When looking for a day program, Angelica says their first priority was Sal's safety, and to find a program that could cover all of his needs. As an example, Sal is "allergic" to heat and can have seizures due to low sodium, so direct care providers at ADS monitor him closely when the weather is hot.

Whether with his family in Wichita, visiting extended family in Mexico, or hanging out with his friends at ADS, Sal is always the center of attention.

"I like talking to people and I like playing Uno," Sal says. When the weather is nice and participants are outside at the recreation area, he says he "likes to sit on the benches and talk to people."

He also likes when the therapy dogs come to visit ADS because it reminds him of his own dog, Keka. Sal also likes when he gets to go on field trips in the community.

"He loves to come here. He is happy here. He talks a lot about everybody," Angelica says. "We have more than we dreamed, more than what was expected for him. We are so grateful. We think he is enjoying his life."



## ANSWERING HIS CALL TO SERVE

*"Sal comes in each morning with a smile on his face, asking how your evening was. Sal does not let anything stop him from going about his day and making sure everyone is having a good day."*

*"I am blessed that I get to be a part of bringing to life all the participants' ideas for learning new things to crafts to outings where they can explore what Wichita has to offer!"*

**Melissa**  
Adult Day Services  
Activities Coordinator



**Sal and Angelica**  
Participant at Adult Day Services and his mother

Sharing God's love by caring for all people.



CatholicCharitiesWichita.org  
(316) 264-8344  
437 N. Topeka St.  
Wichita, KS 67202

**236**  
volunteers

donated **12,541** hours of their time serving the ministries



**11,830**  
calls

answered by the 24/7 crisis line at Harbor House



**\$1,122,780**

value of items and services donated as in-kind gifts



**38,682** meals

served to clients of Harbor House and St. Anthony Family Shelter



**2,789**  
donors

financially supported Catholic Charities

*"We hope that through our own lives, we can inspire our children and grandchildren to continue generations of stewardship and a commitment to giving back to those in need."*

**COLLEEN AND ALLEN**  
CATHOLIC CHARITIES DONORS



**2,503** sessions at Cana Counseling

helped 312 people as they navigate their mental health and healing relationships



**696** clients in southeast Kansas

were provided household stabilization assistance, rent and utility vouchers and financial literacy through Southeast Kansas Services