

6th Sunday of Easter
May 5 & 6, 2018
All Saints Church

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My name is Kate Holmes and I work in the Refugee Resettlement Program at Catholic Charities of Onondaga Co. Last Thursday was the National Day of Prayer and tomorrow we will observe that day by walking a procession on the North Side of Syracuse stopping at various houses of worship. We will be walking in Unity with people of different faiths and praying for solutions for **Racism, Poverty, Militarism and ecological oppression**. All of which lack **LOVE**, the theme of our readings today. In the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, where Peter said **"I begin to see how true it is that God shows no partiality- rather that any person of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to God."**

My job at Catholic Charities Refugee Program allows me to be with people of many nationalities. They speak many languages, where I only speak one, have had unbelievable journeys, great heartache and triumphs- what I have noticed is that they all have **faith** and a tremendous love of family. It is often that faith that has brought them the heartache but also what brought them through it. We are in the **Year of the Family in our diocese** and working with refugees it reminds me that Jesus and his family were refugees. They were unwelcomed, unwanted and hunted. We are called to **Love** one another because **love is of God**. As told by John in our second reading. Everyone who loves is begotten of God because God has loved us.

I know the generosity of this parish. I know you are a **loving and welcoming** parish. You **live today's** Gospel "loving one another as God has loved you" I know you are generous with your time and talents as well as financially. I know the last thing you want to hear is open your wallets yet again. But I'm here to talk to you about how the **Hope Appeal** serves our larger diocesan family. I know this parish treats those they meet as family. And I know you have many ministries, not unlike Catholic Charities of Onondaga Co. We serve the **homeless and vulnerable**, we work with **teen parents**, those with **addiction**, Veterans, **refugees**. Where there is a need, we serve. Our Strategic Priorities as an agency are **Human Life and Dignity** and **Family and Marriage**.

In the area of **Human Life and Dignity**, we will study and apply the principles of Catholic social teachings in service to all our brothers and sisters, with special emphasis on advocacy for the poor, disenfranchised, immigrants and refugees. We will work to eliminate the darkness caused by neglect, poverty, racism and addictions.

In the area of **Family and Marriage**, we will make advancement of **healthy family life** a central strategy for combatting poverty and for the promotion of **social justice** with special attention to the **homeless, the poor and immigrants**. We will reach out and accompany struggling or broken families with the mercy and healing power of Christ. And with the love we are taught in the readings today.

These are the strategic priorities laid out for the Hope Appeal Campaign. This is the work we will do **with and for** our parish and diocesan family members.

For our **Refugee Program**, The Hope Appeal funding is used for personnel. In this current political climate, there is less funding but a greater need. The Hope Appeal matches funding. One of the most important areas of personnel funding we use from Hope Appeal is for **interpreters**, most of whom are refugees or former refugees.

Catholic Charities **Emergency Assistance Services** provides food and personal care items through our **Food Pantry**, help with **prescriptions**, security deposits, rent payments to avoid evictions. Emergency services serves approximately **4000 different** individuals. Hope Appeal funding provides matching funds which leverage other grant opportunities and flexibility to respond to a variety of needs which are not otherwise met.

Our **Emergency Shelters**, one for men and the other for women and their children. We provide assistance to over **1450 individuals**. Hope Appeal funding allows for 24/7 housing for the most vulnerable members of our community family.

Elderly Services keeps vulnerable members of the community in our fold by offering socialization, in home work interventions, transportation and education about services available to them. We serve about **2000 seniors** each year. **Hope Appeal** funding matches county contracts so we can employ the right people to serve our elders.

Parent Education works with vulnerable families to increase their resources, parental knowledge and skills reducing the risk of neglect and foster care placement. We serve **484 families** which includes **835** children annually. **Hope Appeal** Funding is used on personal so that **home visits** and **parenting classes** and **support groups** can continue and **99% of the children** served avoid foster care placement.

Our Clinical Services serves those most in need and utilizes four best practice models: **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy**, Dialectical Behavior therapy, **child parent psychotherapy** and trauma resilience model. We serve **333 clients** annually and offer clinical sessions and group skill building. Hope Appeal Funding supports personnel expenses for this important work.

Catholic Charities of Onondaga Co's **Youth Development** serves nearly **600** children through after school programming, school holiday activities and summer program. **Hope Appeal** funding is used for supplemental staff and supplies for enrichment activities.

As you can see, Catholic Charities relies on The Hope Appeal to continue to serve those most in need. I only highlighted some of the work we do because of the Hope Appeal Funding. The programs I mentioned serve almost **10,000** people annually.

In today's Gospel we are commanded **to Love one Another**. In this year of the family, we are to look at our brothers and sisters in our community and call them family. Catholic Charities of Onondaga County serves that family with the support of you, and other parishes in the Syracuse Diocese. Please consider how your support of the Hope Appeal translates into helping over 10,000 of our extended family each year.

Tomorrow, rain or shine, we are having our second annual Procession of Neighbors- all faiths hand in hand to support immigrants and refugees. We will begin at 3:00 at the Destiny Christian Church at 514 Turtle St. and process down North Salina St, stopping at various houses of worship and concluding at Mosque at 466 North Salina St. A reception will follow at the CYO where there will be light snacks and fellowship. It's a great opportunity to share your love with your neighbor and community family.