



## Catholic Charities Social Concerns

Dear Friend in Christ,

It is hard to believe that the beginning of the Lenten Season is right around the corner, with Ash Wednesday on March 6. If you are not aware, the Catholic faith teaches that there are **three pillars to Lent Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving**. Most of us are familiar with the prayer and fasting side of Lent. It is a liturgical season full of rich, deeply moving prayers and services calling us to conversion. And who can ignore the onslaught of restaurant fish commercials that run during Lent, reminding us to fast from meat. Even Chick-fil-a has a fish sandwich that is only available during Lent!!



But, I want to focus the March issue of the Social Concerns newsletter on the often-overlooked almsgiving side of Lent. Wait!... Before, you stop reading, I am not going to ask you for money, but I want to share with you a personal story about how my neighbor's generosity with her vegetables helped place almsgiving in a new spiritual context for me.

I grew up with the notion that each week we were expected to put money into the offering basket at church. I saw it as an obligation, just something we were expected to do. It wasn't until I answered my doorbell to find my neighbor extending a basket full of vegetables towards me that I began to see the deeply spiritual side of almsgiving.

She said; "I would like your family to be the recipients of our 'first fruits.'" I must have looked confused because she went on to explain that as an offering back to God, she wanted our family to receive the first vegetables from their home garden. I realized then she was referring to the biblical story of Cain and Able.

If you are not familiar with the story, it is the story of Adam and Eve's two sons, Cain and Able. It was customary during that time that an offering be made to God of the "first fruits" of the harvests or livestock in thanksgiving for God's generosity throughout the year. Able, a shepherd, chose the best of his flock to offer back to God as a sacrifice in thanksgiving, whereas Cain, a farmer, was a bit stingy and choose to offer God the leftovers from his crop. Needless to say, God was not

pleased. Sadly, the story does not have a happy ending. If you remember, Cain killed his brother Able out of jealousy.

But, I digress...back to happier thoughts of my neighbor and her vegetables. The reason I mentioned the story of Cain and Able was because my neighbor was living by the example of Able. As an offering to God, she didn't want to keep the first fruits of her garden to herself, but wanted to give them as a gift to our family as a way to honor God. I remember feeling very humbled that she chose our family as the recipients of her "first fruits." It was then that I began to spiritually reflect on what it meant to offer God my "first fruits" or in other words what I was giving back to God in my almsgiving. If I could feel such humble joy over my neighbor's offering to me of her first vegetables, how pleasing it must be to God when I offer Him the best, not my leftovers.

During Lent, as you prayerfully reflect on what are your "first fruits", please keep in mind that there are many resources available from Catholic Charities and Catholic Relief Services to help us along our Lenten path. This includes prayerful reflections, spiritual exercises for individuals, children and families, and opportunities for almsgiving throughout the Lenten season. For instance, at [Catholic Charities USA](#), you can [sign up](#) to receive short daily Lenten reflections that are based on the readings of that day.

[Catholic Relief Services](#) also offers some great Lenten resources via their [CRS Lenten Rice Bowl](#) program. We have a running joke here at the office that the "CRS Rice Bowl ain't your grandma's Rice Bowl anymore!" Via the CRS Lenten Program, there are many "opportunities to share the journey with members of our human family around the world, and commit our Lenten prayers, fasting and almsgiving to deepening our faith and serving those in need." Please see below in the "Featured Social Ministry" section the many, wonderful resources CRS has available for all of us to live the "first fruit's" of our faith!

As you approach this Lent, my prayer for each of you is that this will be a season of reflection, transformation, conversion, healing, and thanksgiving.

Sincerely in Christ,

*Theresa Chamblee*

Catholic Charities - Director of Social Concerns



Visit our Website - Catholic Charities - Social Concerns

# Featured Social Concerns Ministry



## Lenten Alms Change Lives

[CRS Rice Bowl](#) is the Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services, the official relief and development agency of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Through CRS Rice Bowl, faith communities in every diocese throughout the United States put their faith into action through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Lenten alms donated through CRS Rice Bowl support the work of CRS in roughly 45 different countries each year. 25% of all donations to CRS Rice Bowl stay in the local diocese, supporting hunger and poverty alleviation efforts. Since its inception in 1975, CRS Rice Bowl has raised nearly \$300 million.

## What is a CRS Rice Bowl?

The iconic [CRS Rice Bowl](#) is a staple on the table of Catholic families across the country during Lent. This simple cardboard box is a tool for collecting Lenten alms—and comes with a Lenten calendar that guides families through the 40 days of Lent with activities, reflections and stories.

## Stories of Hope

[CRS Rice Bowl](#) shares stories of hope from CRS' work around the world. These stories are examples of the kinds of communities where the Lenten alms of participating US Catholics are changing lives. Each Story of Hope also emphasizes a principal of Catholic Social Teaching.

For five of the six weeks of Lent, CRS introduces us to a new person and shares their Story of Hope.

### [Week One: A Story of Hope from Guatemala](#)

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

### [Week Two: A Story of Hope from Uganda](#)

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

### [Week Three: A Story of Hope from Sri Lanka](#)

Call to Family, Community and Participation

## [Week Four: A Story of Hope from Sierra Leone](#)

Rights and Responsibilities

## [Week Five: A Story of Hope from Gaza](#)

Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

Make Sure you check out all the other great Lenten resources offered at [CRSRiceBowl.org](http://CRSRiceBowl.org) including Reflections, [Stations of the Cross](#), and [Lenten Recipes](#).

Order your Free CRS Rice Bowl [HERE](#) or  
Download the [Rice Bowl App](#)

# Stories of Hope From Guatemala



## Life and Dignity of the Human Person

Catholic social teaching inspires and guides how we are to live and work in the world. In this principle, Life and Dignity of the Human Person, Jesus reminds us that we are all made in God's image and likeness. That means that every human being has a special value and a purpose. We need to care for each other so we can be the people God calls us to be.

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## [Encounter Norma](#)

For young families living in the mountains of Guatemala, raising a baby can be hard. Most families grow corn and beans for a living, but a long-standing drought has caused harvests to shrink. There are few job opportunities, which means putting food on the table is a daily challenge. That's why when Norma discovered she was pregnant, she wondered how she would manage. "When I was young, my mom and dad didn't have money to buy much food," she says. "My mom would split one egg among four children." Norma wanted more for her son, Victor.

But at age 20, she didn't have much experience beyond helping her mother around the house. So, she looked for help. She found it in a CRS-sponsored program that teaches young mothers how to raise healthy children, grow nutritious food in small gardens and manage a healthy diet. Plus, CRS provided Norma with food throughout her pregnancy and monthly medical check-ups during Victor's first two years of life.

"I learned a lot of beautiful things," Norma says. "I learned how to take care of my

boy and what foods to feed him so that he can grow healthy and strong.”

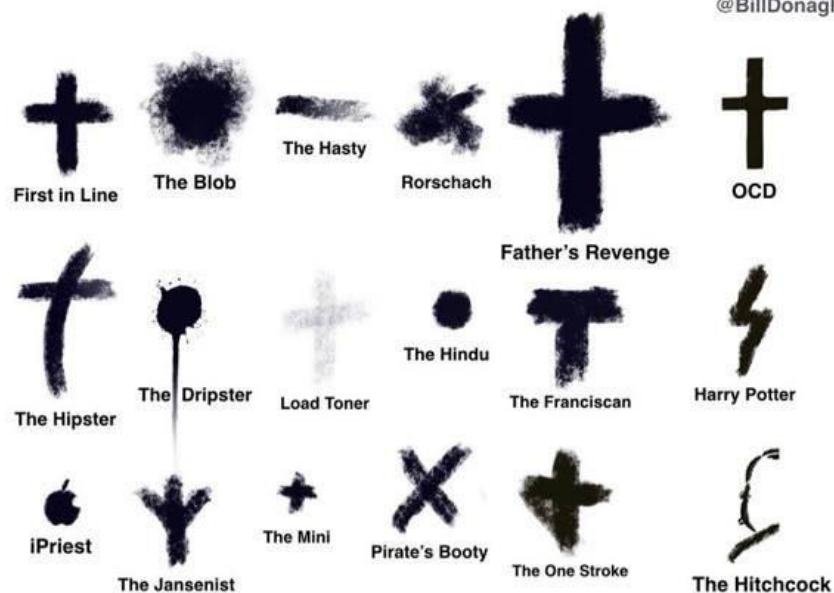
Now, Norma is sharing what she learned with others as a “mother monitor.” “It makes me proud to share the experience I had and the lessons I learned with other women,” she says. It makes Norma proud—and makes her community a better place to raise a family.

[Watch Norma 's Story HERE](#)

## A Little Catholic Humor

### A Catholic Guide to Ashes, *Extended Edition*

@BillDonaghy



## Save the Date





# Parish Social Ministry Gathering South June 8th, 2019

## When

Saturday, June 8th

## Where

St. Mary of the Knobs Catholic  
Church  
Floyds Knobs, Indiana

**Stay Tuned - More Information  
will be coming Soon!**

**Why the Parish Social Ministry (PSM) Gathering  
might just be what you have been waiting for!**

- If you have ever had the urge to do more within your parish but you don't know where to start?
- Do you feel like it is always the same 10 people doing all the work?
- Are you interested in learning practical skills to make ministry within your parish thrive?

These are just some of the items we will be discussing together at the PSM Gathering.

## Highlights of Your Great Work

**We want to hear about how you have made a difference!!!**

**We all know our Archindy Parishes do tremendous work in ministering, loving, and supporting their neighbors.**

**The purpose of this segment is to highlight YOU!**

**Let us know about the good work of your ministries.**

**Share your stories.**

**Share your pictures.**

**Who knows, hearing about the work of different parish ministries may spur on some new ideas for you!**

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**Holy Name of Jesus  
School  
Beech Grove, IN**

# Bubble Drive

Over a two week period, the students of Holy Name School, Pre-K-3 through 8th grade, collected hygiene and cleaning supplies to be given to our neighbors in need who visit the Catholic Charities Crisis Office.



Many of the people who visit the Crisis Office are considered the "working poor". These are individuals who have minimum wage jobs, but usually have to choose between food or paying the bills. So often, when someone finds themselves in need, these "bubble" items become luxury items as food needs to come first.



**CATHOLIC CHARITIES**  
**Ministry Highlight**

# Caregiver Support Catholic Charities - Indianapolis



Support groups for family and friends caring for adults aged 60 and older. Caregiving can be emotionally and physically demanding. The groups are a way for individuals to meet, share with and learn from others experiencing caregiving issues. Depending on the month, the groups may be open discussion or there may be a focused presentation. Support group benefits can include feeling less isolated, the ability to speak honestly without being judged, improving coping skills, and increasing knowledge of resources.

For additional information on groups and other support programs,  
please contact

Monica Woodsworth at 317-261-3378  
[mwoodsworth@archindy.org](mailto:mwoodsworth@archindy.org)

Northside:

Location: Indiana Interchurch Center,  
1100 W 42nd Street, Indianapolis, 46208

Southside:

Location: St. Mark Catholic School,  
541 E. Edgewood Avenue, Indianapolis, 46227

Brownsburg

Location: Brownsburg Older Adult Alliance,  
554 Pitt Rd 46112

**Catholic Campaign for Human Development  
Internship Available**

**Catholic? Interested in Fighting Poverty?**

**Intern with the Campaign Campaign  
for Human Development (CCHD)**

**Internship Information**



**Who?** Any U.S. Catholic with an interest in solidarity building, participation of the poor, and Catholic social teaching.

**What?** Intern will assist the Catholic Charities – Director of Social Concerns, in promoting CCHD in the diocese. Tasks will vary but may include: parish education, training and outreach; letter and article writing; research; visiting funded groups; and developing relationships with community organizations. Internships are paid at a rate of \$14.00/hour.

**Where?** Archdiocese of Indianapolis – Catholic Center  
1400 N. Meridian Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202  
**Apply at:** [www.archindy.org/cchd](http://www.archindy.org/cchd)

**When?** Internships are offered during **September 2019 to May 2020**. Participation in a May 29 – 31, 2019 orientation is required for all interns.

**Why?** To support this important ministry of the Church while building professional skills and relationships.



## FROM OUR FRIENDS



**Society of St. Andrew**  
**GLEANING AMERICA'S FIELDS**  
**FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY**  
EndHunger.org

Did you know that 40% of our food in America never makes it to market and is wasted in a farm field? Did you know that 14% of Hoosiers do not have enough food to eat? There are two clear difficulties in America today surrounding the issues of hunger and poverty. There is hunger and there is food being wasted. Society of St. Andrew seeks to fill the gap between these two problems.

In Indiana, we now have a regional office located in Indianapolis and we are working throughout the state. How can you be involved? Do you know a farmer who would like their field gleaned? Do they just have too many tomatoes this year,

did they not sell all of their zucchini, or did they plant too much corn? Connect us to farmers because there is no liability on their part to have us glean or to donate their produce AND they receive a tax statement at the end of the year for their tax purposes. Do you want to come glean with us? Please do! Not only are you helping feed those who are food insecure but you are reducing food waste AND it's lots of fun too!

### For More Information - Contact

Dawn Barnes  
Indiana Regional Director  
317.279.5119  
[indiana@endhunger.org](mailto:indiana@endhunger.org)

## Prayer of the Month

### Shine Through Me

Dear Lord, help me spread your fragrance where I go.

Flood my soul with your spirit and life.

Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that all my life may only be a radiance of yours.

Shine through me, and be in me, so that every soul I come in contact with may feel your presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me, but only you, O Lord!

Stay with me, then I shall begin to shine as you do; to shine so as to be a light to others. The light, O Lord, will be all from you; none of it will be mine; it will be you shining on others through me.

Let me thus praise you in the way you love best, by shining on those around me.

Let me preach you without preaching, not by words but by my example, by the catching force, the sympathetic influence of what I do, the evident fullness of the love my heart bears to you.

Amen.

(Daily Prayer of St. Teresa of Calcutta)

## Ministries of Catholic Charities Social Concerns

### What is Social Concerns?

Social Concerns encourages the Community to grow in a deeper understanding of Catholic Social Teaching by providing resources and strategies for effective action in parishes, schools and surrounding communities. Most importantly, it calls us to a deeper understanding in living out the Two Greatest Commandments, which is to Love God and to Love our Neighbors, both locally

and globally."

Below are the Ministries that fall under Catholic Charities - Social Concerns.



*Love Your Neighbor*



Share the Journey  
#sharejourney



Catholic Charities - Social Concerns | Theresa Chamblee  
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OF INDIANAPOLIS  
*The Church in Central and Southern Indiana*

**Catholic Charities**  
*Providing Help. Creating Hope. Serving All.*