

MATTHEW 25 IN ACTION

A NEW CHAPTER OF SERVICE AT 8001 LONGVIEW ROAD

After four years of dedication and hard work, Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph is thrilled to announce our new headquarters is officially open at 8001 Longview Road, the former site of St. Matthew's Parish.

This transformation has been a long journey, one that began with the purchase of the vacant building, encountered a \$6M capital campaign, and culminated with a fully renovated space **To Serve & To Lift** the community.

On our soft-open date, **November 6**, we served a **record number of people**, a clear indication

that we are in the right place, at the right time. Many of our neighbors in need are the **working poor** - full-time employed people who struggle to make ends meet until the next paycheck. The need for support is undeniable, and this new facility is perfectly positioned to meet those needs.

Our **client-choice food pantry** has been operating ad hoc out of the building while under construction for over a year. Providing this essential food with the dignity of self-choice empowers our neediest neighbors and is just one example of how we're meeting the evolving needs of our community.

When St. Matthew's Parish closed, the gospel reading for the day was from **Matthew 25**, a passage that speaks to the importance of caring for the vulnerable. It was a true "God-wink," a sign that this building - once a house of worship - was destined to continue serving the community through corporal acts of mercy and charity.

We've hit the ground running, and we're excited about what the future holds as we serve and lift our neighbors in need. Read more about our Ribbon Cutting on page 5.

By Ashley Everett, Director of Marketing and Communications at Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph



FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

The Same Story...Next Chapter:

As we embark on this new chapter, constructing a strategic plan, we're filled with hope and excitement for the next five years. Your unwavering support has been instrumental in enabling countless individuals to overcome adversity, building brighter futures and we will continue this beautiful work.

Together, we've witnessed remarkable progress: families finding stable housing, children and parents going from crisis to thriving, and communities strengthened by our collective efforts. Your generosity in giving time as a volunteer, money as a donor or both has fueled these achievements, and we're incredibly grateful for your partnership. Our new Serve & Lift Center (previously St. Matthew's church) is a testament to this alliance and God's loving grace. We now have space for more volunteers to participate in their faith and serving more

people through our corporal works of mercy. It is worth noting, where the altar once stood providing spiritual food for parishioner's for over 56 years, through the consecrated body and blood of Christ now sits our food pantry/kitchen providing physical nourishment for those in need. That is beautiful!

In the years to come, we're committed to expanding our impact to reaching even more people and in our rural areas. We'll continue to innovate, adapt to changing circumstances, and prioritize the well-being of our clients.

With your support, we can:

- **Provide essential services:** From housing assistance to job training, we'll ensure that our clients have the tools they need to succeed.
- **Advocate for systemic change:** We'll work tirelessly to address the root causes of poverty and the destabilization of the traditional family

- **Build stronger communities:** By fostering connections with parishes, community partners and empowering individuals, we'll create vibrant and resilient communities.

I wish for everyone to be excited about their faith and experience the sheer fulfillment you receive when helping others. If you feel compelled to teach a class, or repair cars, or build gardens or well (insert your thoughts here) please call me. Our next chapter of growth will focus on empowering people of goodwill who are called to share their gifts with those in need.

Let me conclude by saying your belief in our mission inspires me and our staff to strive for excellence. Thank you for being a part of our journey. Together, we can create a future where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

By Karen Noel, Chief Executive Officer
of Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph

WE ARE THERE.

Lifting up our neighbors
in need





LEARN MORE



Our Marketing team at CCKCSJ is honored to receive two Philly Awards from NonProfit Connect! Together, we created an award-winning collaborative campaign and medium video to spread hope and make a difference. This recognition celebrates the power of teamwork and a shared mission to serve our community.

Congrats - Ashley Everett, Emilia Shoup and Steve Hagelman!

RAGS TO RICHES: THE POWER OF GENEROSITY

When I was six years old, I believed I was the long-lost daughter of the Queen of England. Growing up in a 100-year-old farmhouse in rural Illinois, surrounded by poverty, it was easier to dream of royal origins than face my reality. Our house was bursting with children and love, but little else. Everything we owned was secondhand or donated by kind church members.

Mine is a rags-to-riches story—not one where a prince swept me off my feet, but one of being served and lifted to the dignity of self-reliance. While I was stuck in scarcity – not enough of anything – a generous couple invested in me. Yes, they were wealthy, but it wasn't the money, it

was the generosity. They didn't "rescue" me; they took an interest in *showing* me a different world than the one I knew. They lifted my chin and reminded me I wasn't forgotten.

Their generosity ignited something in me. It wasn't a quest to take more of what they offered—it was a desire to *be* them. To move from a person on the receiving end of generosity to the giving end. I decided to follow their example and become the person who was generous. They showed me that generosity is more than giving things; it's about lifting someone's chin when they're weary, about caring when they feel forgotten. Generosity means seeing someone's potential, even when they can't see it themselves. My generous couple didn't have a roadmap for me—they didn't hand me step-by-step instructions for success. Instead, they modeled what it looks like to live generously and trust that others can rise.

"Whether through a kind word, a thoughtful gesture, or a larger act of giving, you can transform someone's story"

Fast forward: I'm now Senior Director of Development at Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph. I raise funds to give them away. You might think, "Mission accomplished?" Not yet.

Since June, I've talked with my team about the difference between scarcity and generosity. Growing up in scarcity, I know its grip - the belief there's never enough. It takes inspiration, grit, and grace to embrace abundance—not just in finances, but in spirit.

At Catholic Charities, this spirit fuels our mission. We serve families facing hunger, homelessness, and poverty—not just with food and shelter, but hope and dignity. Like that couple did for me, we

don't just meet immediate needs; we show people their story isn't over.

You don't have to be wealthy to live generously. It begins with seeing the potential in others and taking an interest in their journey. Maybe you can't give someone a scholarship, but you can volunteer at the food pantry. Maybe you can't pay their bills, but you can remind them they matter. Generosity is the simple, profound act of saying, "I see you, I believe in you, here's a hand up."

Looking back, I realize my childhood wasn't as devoid of riches as I once thought. There was richness in love, in faith, and in frozen pizza on Friday nights. But when generosity stepped into my life, it unlocked a future far beyond my imagination.

As I serve in my role here, I carry my generous couple's legacy forward. My story, like so many others, is proof that generosity changes lives—not just for those who receive, but for those who give.

Wherever you are in life, you can live generously. Whether through a kind word, a thoughtful gesture, or a larger act of giving, you can transform someone's story. You can show them the world is bigger than they imagined—and that they belong in it.

Ask yourself: How can I live generously? How can I lift someone's chin and show them there's more to their story? Small acts of generosity sometimes ripple in ways we can't see. But at Catholic Charities, we are your generous arm, and we see the ripples lifting our neighbors in need. Together, lives are re-imagined, one generous act at a time.



By Jody Breuer, Senior Director of Development at Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph

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Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph

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Scan the QR or go to **cars4kc.com** to learn more.

HOPE, HOPE, HURRAY!



Inaugural Class with Karen Noel, CEO, Bishop Johnston and Michael J. Nolte, Chairman.

That’s the cheer we shouted at the start of every waltz rehearsal for our Inaugural Hope Ball last April. It started soft but grew louder and louder, filling the room with excitement and promise. The Honorees didn’t just chant it—they *owned* it. Their energy was electric, setting the tone for something unforgettable. Where high school juniors and seniors were honored for living their faith and serving others through acts of charity.

For me, this journey is deeply personal. I’m a proud “Girl Dad x 3,” and my connection to

Catholic Charities runs 40 years deep. It began in 1984 when my wife and I sought to adopt a baby, and our prayers were answered. That year, the prettiest, smartest little girl floated into our arms, and our family was forever blessed.

I’ve served on the Catholic Charities Board before, but with the sale of my company, Nolte’s Bridal, I now have time to give more. My 45 years as a wedding and event planner made this opportunity a “marriage made in heaven” (pun intended!) when Karen Noel, CEO, invited me to chair the first Hope Ball for our diocese.



Bud Fallon receives his blessing and medallion.

At Hope Ball, we experience the works of Catholic Charities and honor our chosen debutantes and gentlemen with all the tradition, beauty, and magic you’d expect at a ball— emphasizing faith and service. Even I got choked up watching Honorees receive their Lady of Hope medallions and be blessed by His Excellency last year.

The 2025 Ball is only two months away on March 29, we are creating a night that unites Catholics and our community to raise vital funds to serve those in need. Please scan the QR code to buy your tickets. Sponsorship and ticket sales close February 28. I hope to see you at the Ball!

By Michael J. Nolte, Founder/Chairman of Hope Ball



Spring colors of coral, yellow, citron and blue were used in tablescapes.



SERVE & LIFT: OPENING NEW DOORS



Bishop Johnston cuts the ribbon as Deacon Joe McNeil, Karen Noel, and Darrell Curls look on.

November 7th is a day I will always remember. The day Catholic Charities cut the ribbon on the Serve&Lift Center was more than just a milestone—it was a celebration of hope, community, and new beginnings. Standing in a packed room, surrounded by so many supporters, I felt a deep sense of pride and gratitude. When Bishop James V. Johnston, Jr. cut the ribbon after blessing every corner of the building, it was a powerful reminder of why we do this work. The confetti cannons added to the excitement, but it was the smiles and heartfelt moments that stayed with me.

The program was filled with touching reflections. Karen Noel, our CEO, spoke about the endless possibilities this center brings to the Hickman Mills community. Hearing Deacon Joe McNeil reflect on St. Matthew's Parish's legacy in this very building was both humbling and inspiring. Council Member Darrell Curls, a former parishioner and a proud supporter of this project, shared how meaningful it was to see this transformation in his own neighborhood.

As I watched guests tour the new facility, their excitement was contagious. Many shared how

uplifting the space felt—bright, welcoming, and full of potential. Seeing them connect with our staff, asking questions about our programs, and sharing their own stories, I felt such pride in what this center represents. It's not just a building; it's a haven of hope for individuals and families who need it most.



We appreciate all who came out to celebrate our Grand Opening!

This ribbon cutting marked the beginning of a new chapter for Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph. It's a chapter full of promise and purpose. Together, we are committed to serving this community with compassion and dignity. Thank you to everyone who joined us for this joyous celebration. Your presence blessed this day and set the tone for the impact the Serve&Lift Center will continue to have.

One thing I know for certain is this: the smiles, the warmth, and the goodwill I saw that day are just the beginning. They're a reflection of the love and care that will live within these walls for years to come. This is where we belong. We're home.

By Ashley Everett, Director of Marketing and Communications at Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph

Our new KC office is in the Hickman Mills community, where more than **31%** of children live in poverty—double Missouri's state average.



We are serving 540% more families than a year ago.



DONATE NOW

A PLACE TO CALL HOME: OLDER YOUTH ADOPTION

Catholic Charities of Kansas City- St. Joseph has had an active, open adoption presence now for 146 years! Currently we do newborn adoptions, and as of recently we are doing older youth adoptions as well.

Here at Catholic Charities Kansas City- St. Joseph we are highlighting our older youth adoption! We are choosing to highlight our older youth program as we are a pilot partnering agency with the state of Missouri for older youth adoptions. There are over 1,600 kids 8 years and older in the state of Missouri alone, who are currently ready to be adopted. Parental rights have been terminated and all potential relative placements have been exhausted. 1,600 kids who do not have a permanent home, or do not know what home is or *HOW* home feels. 1,600 kids that just want a family. This is such a huge opportunity and need within our community and state.

The process to adopt an older youth is quicker, giving you so much more time to spend with your youth as well as make a life-changing impact on that child. You can view children who are ready for new homes currently residing in Missouri at the following address: <https://moheartgallery.org/gallery/>.

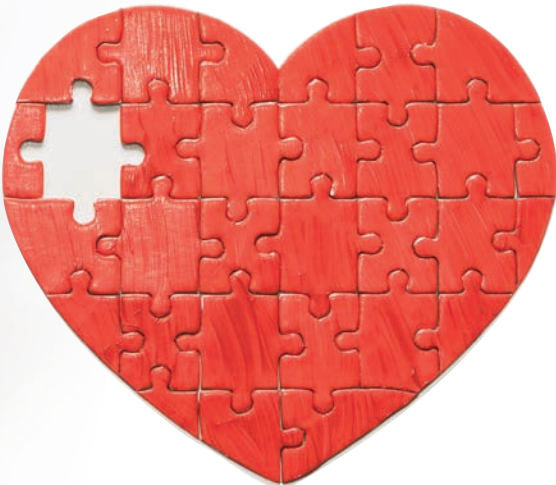
sympathy and manifesting

Family /'fæməli/
n. 1 A group of one or more parents living with children in unity.

One thing that families all have in common is, that they do not all look alike. Our families are made up of many units, whether it is a blood relative or not. These days, many consider friends to be family. Some families are made up of nieces and nephews or grandparents caring for grandchildren, and some families with adopted children.

If you currently live in the state of Missouri, are 21 years and older, married, in good physical and mental health, exhibit solid and safe parenting practices and can provide a safe, secure, loving home environment; please consider the thought of adopting. If adoption is something that has been in your heart, we would love to hear from you!

By Bonnie Maloney, Adoption Social Worker
at Catholic Charities of Kansas City–St. Joseph.
<https://catholiccharities-kcsj.org/adoption-services>
E-mail: bmaloney@ccharities.com
816-648-0555



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FROM HOMELESSNESS TO HOPE: YOUR DONATIONS CHANGE LIVES & EARN TAX REFUNDS

Earlier this year, Mandy came to us wanting help to find a job. Mandy had previously struggled with substance abuse, but after completing rehab, was residing in a sober living house. She was excited to re-enter the workforce and provide for herself. Unfortunately, I learned a barrier to Mandy working was an expired ID. To renew her state ID, she had to provide her birth certificate. Mandy wasn't born in Missouri, so we helped her order a birth certificate from out of state; 12 weeks later, it finally arrived.

During those 12 weeks, Mandy was evicted for not being able to pay rent (because she couldn't get a job.... because she didn't have an ID.... because she didn't have a birth certificate) and became homeless. The stress of living on the street led to a substance relapse. You see how things go sometimes?

Thankfully, this story has a happy ending. Mandy eventually returned to rehab and upon release, called me again to see if her birth certificate had arrived. It had, and we were able to work together to get Mandy a job. She is now employed at a living wage and is working hard to regain custody of her children. I share this story with Mandy's permission, because for many, the line between having a home and not having a home, between sobriety and addiction is razor thin.

Your donations to Catholic Charities matter in lifting moms like Mandy from homelessness to self-reliance. AND, you could get a tax refund for helping!

The state of Missouri offers tax credits in exchange for some types of charitable donations to incent investment in areas that benefit the state's economy or social welfare. This allows individuals and/or businesses to direct their state income tax to programs they care about.

Just like some credit cards give you cash back for every dollar you spend; the state of Missouri essentially gives you cash back if you donate to a qualified program.

For those who aren't tax aficionados, tax **deductions** reduce the amount of income you pay taxes on while tax **credits** reduce the amount of taxes you owe. Dollar-for-dollar, tax credits are much more valuable, and you can receive tax credits even if you don't itemize deductions on your return. If you've already paid your Missouri state income tax through automatic payroll deductions, you can still claim tax credits, and you may get a refund.

The two Catholic Charities programs that provide tax credits in exchange for donations are Mom's Empowerment and Food Pantry. Donations to our **Mom's Empowerment program receive a 70% tax credit match**; donations to our **Food Pantry program receive a 50% tax credit match**.

Let's say you owe \$10,000 in Missouri state tax. If you donate \$10,000 to Mom's Empowerment, the tax credit is \$7,000; so instead of owing \$10,000, you'll only owe \$3,000 in state tax.

Businesses can take advantage of this, too, if they owe Missouri state tax. If you'd like to donate and receive tax credits, call Deanna Ricke at 816-398-6894, or email at DRicke@CCharities.com.

You can also go to our website <https://catholiccharities-kcsj.org>. Click on the "Support Us", then "Donate." In the donation "comments" section, put "Tax Credits", and I'll contact you about tax credit opportunities.

Rachel, another mother served in our Mom's Empowerment Program.

Your donation truly makes a difference. In Mandy's case, the cost of 12 weeks of rent was \$1,680. \$1680 could have saved her from eviction and addiction. Every dollar matters. Thank you for sharing yours with us.

By Deanna Ricke, Corporate Engagement Director at Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph





HopeMatters



Catholic Charities of Kansas City – St. Joseph
8001 Longview Road
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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We need volunteers to keep our client-choice food pantry running smoothly! Flexible shifts are available Monday through Thursday between 7:30 AM and 4:00 PM, so you can find a time that works for you. If you're unable to volunteer during those hours, you can still support us by organizing a food drive—anytime, anywhere! Every hour of service or donation collected directly impacts individuals and families in our neighborhoods. Join us in creating hope and making a lasting difference—your time and effort matter! **Email: volunteers@ccharities.com to learn more!**



Royal Service! Volunteers Debbie Griffler and Sue Cerney bring their hometown pride to the Serve&Lift Center



Linda Colbern proves no job is too tough when it comes to serving others—spud-tacular dedication at the Serve&Lift Center!



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