

More refugees in the world but fewer places for them in U.S. 9
Migrant stories reveal why they leave home 9

CATHOLIC CHARITIES Connections

SUPPLEMENT TO ARKANSAS CATHOLIC • CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF ARKANSAS • 2415 N. TYLER ST. • LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72207 • NOVEMBER 24, 2018

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, employer trainings, education and advocacy, legal assistance with applications for DACA

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

■ **Parish social ministries:** Parish-based ministry development, disaster recovery parish-based teams, family assistance

■ **Social Action:** Prison ministry, Catholic Campaign for Human Development, legislative advocacy, alcohol and drug, Catholic Charities Summer Institute

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

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Catholic Charities of Arkansas
2415 N. Tyler St.
Little Rock, AR 72207
(501) 664-0340
www.dolr.org

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.

Making one brighter day at a time

Arkansans benefit from donations to CCHD collection

Each year, the Diocese of Little Rock takes up a second collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development during the weekend before Thanksgiving.

Twenty-five percent of this collection remains in the diocese and is used by Catholic Charities of Arkansas to fund what is called the CCHD Local Grant Program. Typically, the total amount available for local grants ranges from \$15,000 to \$20,000.

Local groups may apply for grants starting on Jan. 1 of each year. The cut-off date for grant submissions is May 31. Grant applications are considered during June and grant checks are sent to successful applicants in early July. Individual grants range from \$200 to \$2,000. The projects for which applications may be submitted are broadly considered, but all constitute a local effort to help serve the poor or marginalized in some manner.

This past year more than \$15,000 was distributed to 25 organizations throughout the state. Most of the grants were aimed at serving a wide population, while a few were focused on very discrete issues.

■ Alpha House in Mountain Home received a grant to help funding needs for its men's homeless shelter. In general, there are few homeless shelters in rural Arkansas. Alpha House has faced



Aprille Hanson

A local grant funded by the CCHD collection is helping Arkansas Pregnancy Resource Center in Little Rock with costs of their mobile sonogram program, especially needed after a fire destroyed their main facility.

competition for funding, as donations tend to go toward programs benefiting only homeless women and children.

■ Local grants went to a number of pregnancy resource centers throughout the state. Hannah Pregnancy Resource Center, El Dorado; My Choice Pregnancy Clinic, Batesville; and Pregnancy

Resource Center for Southwest Arkansas, Arkadelphia are three pregnancy resource centers in rural areas of the state that do pro-life work in cooperation with their local Catholic parishes. Further, a grant went to the Arkansas Pregnancy Resource Center in Little Rock to help with costs of operating their mobile sonogram program, which

was especially needed in light of the fire that destroyed their facility.

■ For the second year, grants went to a number of feeding programs and food pantries, some also offering financial assistance, in all areas of the diocese: the Charleston Ministerial Alliance

See CCHD page 8

One Church aims to help our Catholic family grow

One Church: Unite Arkansas in Faith and Mission is the title of a new program in our diocese.

Nearly two years ago, Father Erik Pohlmeier came to me to ask a question on behalf of the diocesan Presbyteral Council: Could Catholic Charities handle a campaign where the parishes in the diocese were asked to help a single parish that needed a boost of assistance?

This was something that Catholic Charities had been doing for a

couple of years on a small scale: matching the needs of a small rural parish with the resources offered by a larger established parish looking to accomplish in-state mission work.

With this context in mind, I said, "Yes" to Father Erik's question.

For the first year of the program, the Presbyteral Council has selected St. Luke Church in Warren as the inaugural target of the efforts of the rest of the parishes in our diocese. This program began in September and

will run for the benefit of St. Luke Church until the end of August 2019, when another church will be chosen to receive assistance.

The church buildings in Warren are small and nearly 100 years old. The church itself and the adjacent rectory are badly in need of extensive repairs. The buildings are situated next to one of the main, and very busy, roads leading into Warren.

Because the church's construction predates the time when there were many cars, it has no parking lot. For Sunday Mass, parishioners must park in the shopping center lot across the street from the church.

On Sundays, the church does not comfortably hold all of the parishioners. Big sisters hold little brothers on laps as families crush into pews to find seats. Latecomers stand, lining the walls and crowding the doorways to hear Mass. The former rectory, used as the religious education building, is just as limited and fails to meet the needs of the parish family.

When the parish plans an event, planning includes weather prayers because all activities must be held outdoors to accommodate the numbers of people attending.

See ONE page 8



From the Director
Patrick Gallaher

BRIEFS

IMMIGRATION EDUCATION

Catholic Immigration Services - Little Rock has recently conducted two workshops for primarily Hispanic immigrants at Holy Spirit Church in Hamburg and Holy Redeemer Church in El Dorado. Both workshops were held immediately after their weekend Spanish Mass. During the presentation the audience was informed about the legal rights they have, even for those who are undocumented immigrants. They were also taught some basics of family-based immigration to see if someone possibly could qualify for a legal immigration benefit. Similar presentations are scheduled for St. Mary Church in Batesville and St. Luke Church in Warren. If you are interested in hosting a presentation at your parish or organization, contact Jennifer Verkamp at jverkamp@dolr.org or (501) 664-0340.

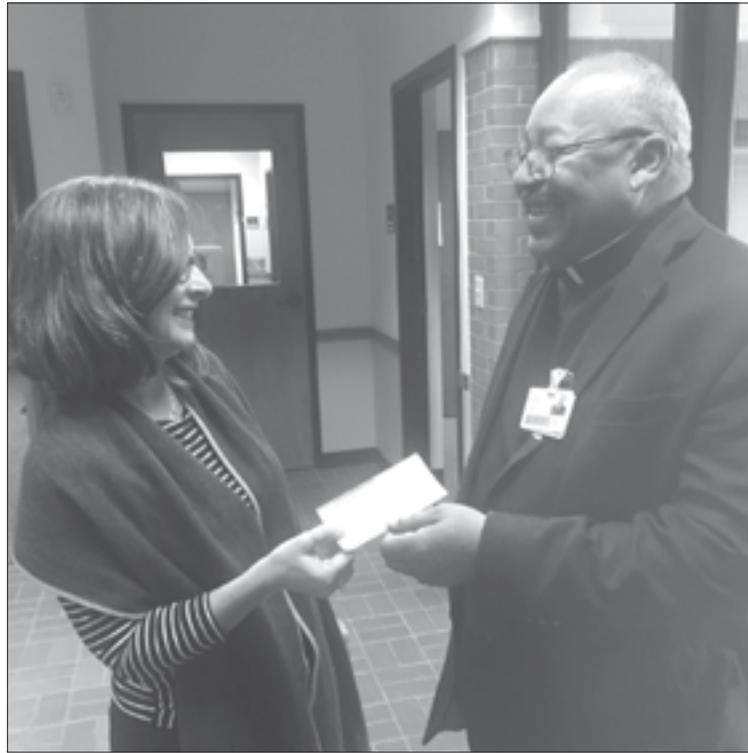
FAMILY IMMIGRATION

Georgina Peña and Dolores Requena, both immigration specialists at Catholic Immigration Services - Little Rock, traveled to El Paso, Texas, Nov. 14-16 to attend a legal immigration conference. The conference, titled "20th Annual Family Immigration Law Conference," was co-sponsored by Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc. and Catholic Charities of Dallas Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services. For the first two days, participants were provided with updated information and analysis on family-based immigration. Most of the trainings were presented by CLINIC attorneys who have worked in the field of immigration law for several years. On the final day, the participants joined a tour of the U.S. Consulate in Ciudad Juarez to gain knowledge so they could better advise clients.

ARTWORK WINNERS

Catholic Charities of Arkansas sponsored a contest to select art for the office's annual Advent card to promote the St. Nicholas Partners fundraiser. St. Nicholas Partners allows donors to design

Helping the helpers



Rebecca Cargile

Father Warren Harvey hands Karla Campalans of Catholic Immigration Services - Little Rock a check from Little Rock's Pax Christi. The donation will help immigrants apply for immigration benefits.

nate a gift for specific programs and to make gift in someone's honor.

In August, all of the Catholic schools in the diocese were invited to submit artwork entries. More than 200 entries from across the state were submitted. The prizes for the first, second and third place winners were \$75, \$50 and \$25 and similar prizes went to each of the schools that the winners attended.

The staff of Catholic Charities took several days to consider the artwork and the judging was difficult given all of the fine art submitted.

The first-place winner is Halen Hoelzeman, daughter of Ashley and Eric Hoelzeman. Halen is a ninth-grader at Sacred Heart School in Morrilton.

The second-place winner is Neelie Kindt, daughter of Kelly and Nick Kindt. Neelie is a second grader at St. John School in

Hot Springs. This year's third-place winner was seventh-grader Emma Stephens, daughter of Justin and Amanda Stephens of Cave Springs. Emma attends St. Vincent de Paul School in Rogers.

FAITH COMMUNITY NURSING

Deborah Meiklejohn, a parishioner at Our Lady of Good Counsel in Little Rock, is committed to bringing Faith Community Nursing to the diocese and helping parishes implement the program. She has completed specialized training, received grant funds and organized an informational retreat in October.

Faith Community Nursing is a new specialty, not a new concept. It is recognized by the American Nurses Association as a specialty practice requiring knowledge and experience in both professional nursing and spiritual care. Faith community nurses monitor

the health, healing and spiritual issues within a faith community by actively promoting wellness, wholeness and preventive care. In a parish, the nurse might help organize a health fair, flu shots or fitness classes or offer a ministry to the sick and homebound.

A course on Foundations of Faith Community Nursing will be offered in 2019.

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

National Adoption Day was celebrated in the U.S. Nov. 17, which is annually celebrated on the Saturday before Thanksgiving. The work to support and help children in foster care goes on all year but having a special day helps to bring additional attention to the need for more adoptive families. It is believed that nationally more than 117,000 children are awaiting a permanent placement. A coalition of national partners that includes The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, the Alliance for Children's Rights and the Children's Action Network all sponsored this day to bring awareness to the pressing concerns. Many children wait more than three years for a home and annually more than 20,000 children age out of the foster care system without a permanent family.

Catholic Adoption Services does not provide long-term foster care. In addition, Catholic Adoptions does not work with children waiting in DCFS foster care, but the agency is helping some babies stay out of the state foster care system. Catholic Adoptions does work with families after a newborn in the hospital nursery tests positive for drugs used by the birth mother. The state statute is called Garrett's Law and some birth parents will decide to place their child up for adoption through licensed agencies like Catholic Adoptions. Carefully screened adoptive parents are selected and have agreed that they are open to possible risks of raising a child exposed to drugs during the pregnancy.

CCHD

Continued from page 7

food pantry; Community Outreach Services, Paris; Cooperative Emergency Outreach, Fayetteville; Cabot's Feed the Veterans; Fishnet Missions, Jacksonville; the Mountain Home Food Basket; St. Joseph Soup Kitchen, Blytheville; St. Thomas Aquinas Sunday Supper, Fayetteville; Soul Food Café Mission, Conway; and Feed the Hungry at Salvation Army, Little Rock. The hallmark of each of these operations was that if they were not run through a Catholic parish, a part of each operation was made up of volunteers and contributions from a local parish.

■ The Local Grant Program was able to provide assistance to particular Catholic programs in a range of subject areas. Parish conferences of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul operating out of St. Anne Church in North Little Rock and Blessed Sacrament Church in Jonesboro received grants to help with their outreach to poor families. A grant to St. Theresa School in Little Rock helped with a child's tuition. The Northwest Arkansas Catholic Respect Life organiza-

The projects ... constitute a local effort to help serve the poor or marginalized in some manner.

tion received a grant for costs of supporting the 40 Days for Life campaign. The Church of the Assumption in Atkins received a grant to buy computer equipment to help with their religious education program. And the Minister for Religious in Little Rock received a grant to help defray conference expenses.

These and more programs all benefited from the generosity of Catholics in the pews whose donations to the Catholic Campaign for Human Development directly served worthy programs in Arkansas.

One

Continued from page 7

During this past year, the parish has been able to purchase a property that was once Warren's farmers co-op. There are buildings — a large warehouse, offices and a four-space garage — located on a 10-acre, fenced plot. The required renovations will be costly, but only a fraction of the expense compared to building from scratch. To afford these expenses, the parishioners have started a capital campaign.

For this first year, it is this capital campaign that will be the main focus of One Church: Unite Arkan-

sas in Faith and Mission.

Rather than a single diocese-wide second collection, this year-long effort contemplates that each parish in the diocese will find its own way to support the families of St. Luke Church. Funds could come from individual donors, groups or parishes. Money could be raised through second collections or through money-raising projects.

The goal should be that every Catholic in our diocese, from youngest to oldest, should think about St. Luke Church and donate something from the heart.

Since September, donation checks have been steadily arriving. While the initial results are

heartening, this project must keep momentum throughout the year to be successful.

Continue to check for progress on the Catholic Charities of Arkansas Facebook page, and do not forget to visit our website dolr.org/one-church.

Father Edward D'Almeida (right), pastor of St. Luke Church in Warren, explains the work needed to convert a former agricultural co-op building into a new church building to Rebecca Cargile, parish social ministry coordinator for Catholic Charities of Arkansas, Aug. 19 in the photo at right.

Malea Hargett



Policy upheaval unsettles refugee resettlement in U.S.

BY REBECCA BRYANT

Our Catholic Charities office in Arkansas has been in the business of formally helping refugees since the 1970s.

Over this time period, programs have become increasingly regulated by the Department of State, which manages resettlement efforts, and by the Department of Health and Human Services, which offers assistance to refugees after their first three months in the U.S., as well as assistance to other similarly vulnerable populations.

The other vulnerable populations are asylees, victims of trafficking, SIVs (people who worked for the U.S. government or contractors in Afghanistan or Iraq) and Cuban Parolees (any Cuban who arrived in the U.S. by land or water).

The number of refugees resettled in the U.S. is governed by the president, who sets an annual ceiling and establishes rules regarding admission and resettlement. From 1990 to 1995, the U.S. received an average of 112,000 refugees, many of them from the former USSR. Since 1995, both the ceiling and the actual number of refugees resettled have vacillated between 50,000 and 100,000 per year. The marked exception was the administration of George W. Bush whose invasion of Iraq led to destabilization, a shift of internal power dynamics and violence that forced millions of Sunni to flee Iraq. Meanwhile, President Bush dramatically reduced the number of refugees admitted to less than 30,000 in both 2002 and 2003 with approximately 40,000 admitted in 2006.

Refugees fared much better under the Obama administration



CNS / Loren Elliott, Reuters

A Honduran man seeks asylum June 26 while waiting on the Mexican side of the Brownsville-Matamoros International Bridge after being denied entry by U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers.

with admissions returning to the 50,000 to 100,000 range, but on average, well under the 112,000 admitted from 1990 to 1995. Finally, with the Trump administration came a dramatic shift in refugee policy. Not only did Trump slash the ceiling of possible admissions, but he instituted dramatic changes in rules governing the process of admission. Some of the new rules were designed to limit the number of Muslim refugees. Other rules gummed up the admission process so that far less than the ceiling would actually arrive. For the fiscal year 2018 — from October 2017 to September 2018 — only 22,491

refugees entered the U.S.

The day-to-day work of helping refugees, once they land in the U.S., is done by a group of nine national organizations and the largest of these has historically been the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Department of Migration and Refugee Services (MRS) oversees dozens of local refugee offices to ensure that resettlement is done in a consistent, fair manner in compliance with Department of State rules.

Due to the fluctuation in the number of refugees admitted from administration to administration, MRS and local resettlement agen-

cies have attempted to build in some resilience. But things came to a boiling point with a new refugee crisis. By 2013, millions of Syrians were fleeing Bashar al-Assad's brutal crackdown on a popular uprising for democracy during Arab Spring. Only those Syrians processed through the United Nations were eligible for admission to the U.S. Under the best of circumstances, U.S. processing takes a minimum of two years. Only about 14,000 Syrians were admitted to the U.S. through FY2016. However, the Obama administration was ramping up capacity to resettle significantly more.

It was this particular phenomenon — efforts to expand capacity and the sudden slamming of immigration doors — that has led to a collapse in refugee resettlement infrastructure. Catholic Charities offices have already closed in the Archdiocese of Dubuque, the Archdiocese of Newark, Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and others. Many more are in the process of closing. Gone with the older agencies are years of experience and skills that will be difficult to replicate.

All agencies resettling less than 100 refugees are at risk of closure. In Arkansas, that includes both Catholic Charities and the new Lutheran agency, Canopy, operating in Fayetteville. Because Catholic Charities provides ongoing services to refugees and other vulnerable populations after the initial resettlement period of three months, we have remained busy up to this date.

In addition to helping the last large wave of refugees, we have assisted a number of asylees from Africa, the Middle East and countries south of the Rio Grande. However, the current administration has also been doing everything possible to throttle the number of asylees. The administration's latest endeavor on this front came in early November, when Trump issued new rules restricting access to asylum seekers. Only those who cross into the U.S. through a port of entry will be able to seek asylum through the credible fear interview process. Texas has only two ports of entry on its 1,254 mile border: El Paso and Laredo.

Rebecca Bryant is the refugee resettlement specialist for Catholic Charities.

Why someone is pushed or pulled to move to another country

BY JENNIFER VERKAMP

I have had the privilege to work with people from different countries. Most of us who live in the U.S. have heard of the horrific journeys endured to arrive here, primarily from Central American countries and Mexico.

These challenging journeys raise the question: How could anyone take such a risk to come to our country? What would make someone chance everything by migrating alone or with their families, when they could possibly even lose their lives trying?

I've grappled with this for a long time. I've come to the conclusion that I will probably never fully understand, because I have never lived an immigrant's reality. To try to understand, I've begun simply



Jennifer Verkamp

to learn what are the root causes of migration.

What are the "push factors," meaning a reason for someone wanting to leave their country? What are the "pull factors," which is why someone would want to move to a new country?

According to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, a push factor could be if an individual is faced with persecution, violence and war. Their pull factors would be the promise of safety, stability and freedom in another country. Another example is if someone is living in extreme poverty, then they would be pulled by possible higher wages and job prospects. We can even consider environmental problems such as pollution, crop failure and natural disaster, which would pull someone to migrate to

find food availability and a better environment. Finally, people can live somewhere with push factors like limited opportunities, lack of services or family separation. They would be pulled by a better quality of life, availability of services and family reunification.

Even when knowing about push and pull factors, I struggle at times with considering how these factors can be someone's reality. What does that really look like? Again, I will never know completely, but I do have an idea, because as mentioned before, I have had the privilege to interact with many from other countries.

I have heard personal accounts

He says he only sees the possibility of providing basic needs if he makes the harsh journey to the United States.

of the young man from El Salvador who is terrified to return to his country due to the threat of losing his life if he does not join a gang. I have spoken with women from Haiti who suffered from hurricanes and earthquakes, who simply cannot rebuild their lives in Haiti. I have even spoken with a man who wants to provide for his family and give his children an education, but makes only a

few dollars a day in Guatemala. He says he only sees the possibility of providing basic needs if he makes the harsh journey to the United States.

Take the time to listen to immigrant stories. To begin to under-

stand, try to find someone to ask their story or do a quick search online. Another idea with the Christmas season quickly approaching would be to read, ponder and pray with the story when King Herod threatens to kill all boys around the age of 2, but Joseph and Mary flee to Egypt with Jesus to save his life.

Identify the push and pull factors in the story of Jesus as well as other migrants and then begin the journey of understanding the reality some might face and why they'd want to migrate to the United States. It does help with understanding and softening hearts as it did mine, but it takes time and persistence with graces from God.

Jennifer Verkamp is the director of Catholic Immigration Services-Little Rock.