

100

— 2023 —
ANNUAL REPORT



A Century of HOPE and Beyond

Message from the Board Chair

Dear Friends,

It is an honor to write this message as the 15th bishop of Buffalo during such a momentous time in Catholic Charities' history. On October 30, Catholic Charities of Buffalo turned 100 years old—a century of serving the Western New York community. What a blessing! It is a privilege to work side by side with Catholic Charities and to see the good works of God's compassion and mercy displayed day in and day out.

Catholic Charities, I have often said, is where our faith is put into action—where those who are hungry are fed, neighbors who are troubled are comforted, and those who are hopeless find hope. Catholic Charities' legacy is one of answering this call, and this has been true throughout the decades.



We know that trends change, needs change, and circumstances change, but the mission of Catholic Charities is timeless. Providing hope when hope feels lost is timeless. Catholic Charities has done this exceptionally

well for 100 years, responding with dignity and compassion and acting out of love for our fellow brothers and sisters.

Congratulations to Catholic Charities and all those who make it what it is—the generous donors, community partners, loyal volunteers, and dedicated employees—all guided by our board and leadership. I also honor the many people who came before us and worked diligently to build a reputation of hope and healing in Western New York. Our work today is possible because of the strong foundation they laid. Finally, but most important, I give gratitude to God for the many blessings He bestows. May He continue to guide us through the next 100 years and beyond!

Sincerely in the love of the Lord,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael W. Fisher".

Most Reverend Michael W. Fisher
Bishop of Buffalo
Chair, Board of Trustees

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President's Message



One hundred years ago, Bishop William Turner, sixth bishop of Buffalo, issued this call to action to our community: "I appeal to you to come to the assistance of those who are in need." Today, those words are the foundation for everything we do, from providing families and individuals with food

and clothing to offering emotional support to those facing life's greatest hardships.

October 30, 2023, held special significance for Catholic Charities of Buffalo—our 100th anniversary. In preparation, we marked these past 12 months with events that engaged the community, celebrated our accomplishments, and reflected on our century-long tradition of community service.

We delighted in our most successful HOPE Day, raising over a half a million dollars in a single day. This success was a testament to the generosity of our donors and the steadfast efforts of our Appeal team, volunteers, and employees.

In the midst of honoring our past and celebrating the present, we eagerly embrace the future.

One such endeavor encompasses innovation and compassion: Angela's House, a permanent supportive

housing program to address homelessness. Located in the former Villa Maria Academy in Cheektowaga, this initiative includes supportive services for people who need assistance with maintaining stable living situations. A collaboration with Delta Development of WNY brought this vision to life, and it is a joy to welcome residents to their new apartments. Looking forward, Noles Court is a similar senior housing program now near the medical corridor on Buffalo's East Side. Our staff offers on-site services here as well.

Through a \$1.6 million grant from the New York State Department of Health, we are poised to expand our behavioral health services through capital improvements at our clinic sites, within the much needed services provided to City of Buffalo residents, particularly those in the East Side community.

During this centennial year, we offer prayers of gratitude for our employees, volunteers, and donors. Together, we are blessed to be called to this important ministry of Christ's Church, to love one another as he loves us, and to be a beacon of HOPE for centuries to come.

Deacon Steve Schumer
President & Chief Executive Officer

Mission

Catholic Charities of Buffalo is a Catholic-sponsored human services agency serving anyone in need in the eight counties of Western New York. Believing all persons are created by God, we advocate for equity and justice for all people and empower individuals, children, and families to achieve and maintain meaningful, healthy, and productive lives.

Vision

Catholic Charities will be a community leader in providing quality, effective, and efficient human services. We will be the premier agency of choice for clients, donors, employees, and volunteers. We will be the beacon of hope for those in need.

Compassion

Following the example of Jesus Christ, we seek to serve all those we encounter with dignity, respect, and the embrace of hope in a trauma-informed way.



Empowerment

Making a difference requires intentional strategies to engage, equip, and support our employees and clients, meeting needs, guiding progress, and effecting systemic change.



Diversity

Each is unique and all are worthy, and in the spirit of inclusion we reach out, invite in, and strive for excellence as we enhance the lives of clients, employees, volunteers, and donors.



Teamwork

We recognize that collaboration and open communication build collegiality and sustain growth, which in turn expands our helpfulness to those in need.



Values

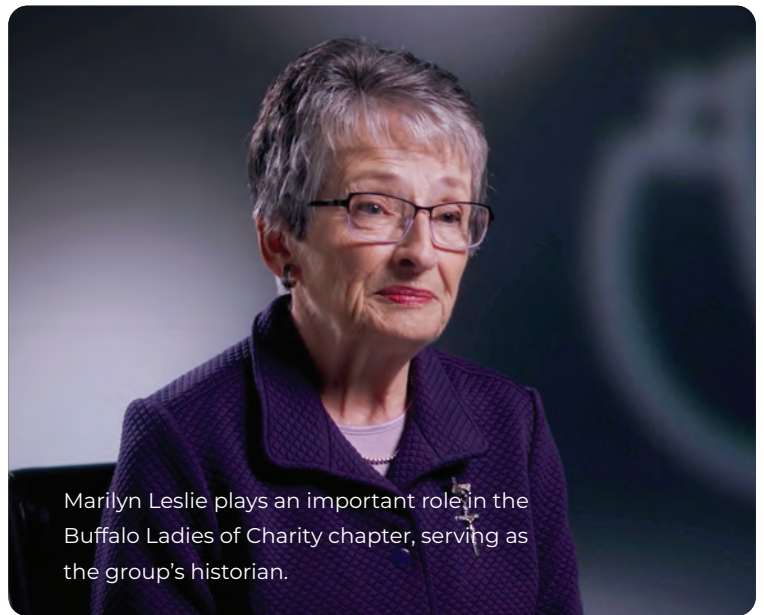
Integrity

We commit to speak honestly, act ethically, and foster trust.



Rallying for World War II

Marilyn Leslie



Marilyn Leslie plays an important role in the Buffalo Ladies of Charity chapter, serving as the group's historian.

World War II saw the start of grassroots endeavors across the nation to bolster war-time efforts. Buffalo was no exception. One example was the Diocese of Buffalo chapter of the Ladies of Charity, a volunteer organization affiliated with Catholic Charities of Buffalo.

Established in 1941, the Ladies of Charity began a centuries-long tradition of serving with simplicity, humility, and charity in the City of Good Neighbors. Founded by St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac in 1617 in France, The Ladies of Charity is a worldwide organization with more than 200,000 members in 54 countries.

Once forming in Buffalo, the members—thousands of women from local parishes—came together to support those overseas and to fill needs at home, such as wrapping bandages, selling war bonds, and setting up blood drives.

Marilyn Leslie, a Ladies of Charity member for 27 years and chapter historian, said the impact was momentous:

"They had so many Ladies of Charity at that time that they could branch out unbelievably when they first started," said Marilyn. "[There were] all kinds of avenues for people to use their time and their talents." She added that some sewed, some bought presents for children and seniors during the holidays, and others organized a Motor

Corps to drive people to different locations and appointments.

In 1943, the Buffalo Ladies of Charity sold \$195,000 in war bonds, collected 3,914 pints of blood, spent 4,610 hours serving meals to 17,827 armed forces members, and volunteered nearly 100,000 hours.

These days, the Buffalo Ladies of Charity works closely with Catholic Charities to fulfill a variety of needs in the community, including providing school supplies and backpacks for students and Christmas gifts, and household items for individuals and families experiencing home displacement. The organization also runs the Lots of Clothes Thrift Store on Buffalo's East Side, a first stop for many asylum seekers this year.

"It's really interesting to hear the different languages," said Marilyn, "and then see them going out with these big smiles."

It's in moments like those that Marilyn sees the all-encompassing nature of Catholic Charities and its partnership with Ladies of Charity.

"You hardly can think of any organization that has so many different programs going; there is literally something for everyone."



1941

In its first year as an official group, the Ladies of Charity record a total of 99,966 volunteer hours.



Leading with Love

Monsignor

Robert J. Williamson



Msgr. Williamson is hard at work for the 1979 Appeal.

At the heart of sustaining Catholic Charities' 100-year legacy is the annual Appeal. The drive started in 1924 to fund the institutions joined together to establish Catholic Charities.

Monsignor Robert J. Williamson stands out among many leaders who played a pivotal role in shaping it. His journey began in 1965 as Appeal assistant director. Several years before retiring in 1995, Msgr. Williamson was appointed associate director of the Appeal and Catholic Charities. Msgr. Williamson introduced donor giving levels and Appeal divisions. In 1971, he even coordinated an Appeal televised special featuring prominent celebrities like Della Reese, Rich Little, and Carol Lawrence.

The common mission of the 16 independent agencies of the Buffalo diocese that became Catholic Charities was to help vulnerable individuals.

Following the agency's incorporation, Bishop William Turner gathered church leaders from across Western New York to develop a novel approach. Instead of soliciting weekly donations for the new charity, they decided to create a

campaign with a specific and short time frame, during Lent and concluding on Palm Sunday. The innovation quite literally paid off as \$318,000 was raised in the inaugural Appeal, igniting HOPE for the future of Catholic Charities in the hearts of all involved.

Late in the twentieth century, economic and social changes in the region brought change to Catholic Charities. The closing of industrial complexes and ensuing layoffs forced Catholic Charities' leaders to rethink where they put their money.

"We saw a great influx of need of things that were not traditional in our envelope of helping potions that we had in the past, and we had to change our ways of helping people based upon the circumstances of the times," said Msgr. Williamson. "They've just reinvented themselves over and over again."

Ultimately, Msgr. Williamson said he believes Catholic Charities' century of success stems from the employees and volunteers who dedicate themselves to the agency.

"People are Catholic Charities. It's not just some office building; it's the people," he said. "It's a people-to-people operation inspired by the love of Christ. And when [we] have that in our heart, who's going to stop us?"

1973



Erie County chairmen of the 1973 Appeal review plans with the then Rev. Robert Williamson, associate Catholic Charities director.

A Spanish Degree and a Passion for Helping

Maria Picone



During her time with Catholic Charities, Maria Picone (second from left) helped advance the Multisystemic Therapy program at Catholic Charities. As part of her work, she both attended and presented at conferences across the country, gaining insight into best practices.

Maria Picone's 43-year journey with Catholic Charities began with a degree in Spanish and a passion for helping others. Her first role was as a community aide at the West Side Family Counseling Center, where she assisted, and eventually counseled, Spanish-speaking clients. Later, she guided the Multisystemic Therapy program serving at-risk teens and their families, before leading the largest department at the time, Family and Community Services. Through it all, Maria embraced the motto, "What do the people need, and how do we help them meet those needs?"

It was a motto that, over the years, helped Maria adjust and adapt her work with clients and keep their needs in the forefront. She began at the agency in the 1970s during President Johnson's War on Poverty, when the focus of staff was on understanding and responding to poverty's physical and emotional impacts. As the years evolved, so did the prevalent issues of the community—ranging from eating disorders to child abuse to trauma-informed care.

"It was always about understanding what people are living with and helping them make some choices around that and move beyond it," she said.

Just two years after joining Catholic Charities, Maria was inspired to seek a master's degree in social work, and with the blessing of Monsignor John J. Conniff, Catholic Charities diocesan director at the time, she later helped develop family therapy training for the agency.

"Family therapy transformed the organization. It raised the level of professionalism and the level of our reputation in the community," Maria said.

Maria's work at Catholic Charities gained recognition over the years. She received the Lifetime Achievement Award in Social Work from the National Association of Social Workers (Western New York Chapter) and the Diocese of Buffalo Bishop McNulty Award for outstanding service to youth, but she is simply honored to have been part of the mission:

"This community has hundreds of thousands of individuals and families who parent better, relate better, and love better because Catholic Charities was there to help them," she said. "The pride we can take in that is beyond measure."



1997

The Multisystemic Therapy program is brought to Catholic Charities. It served more than 400 clients in its first five years.



Naturally Nurturing

Darlene Sery



For 42 years Darlene Sery has dedicated herself to making a difference in the lives of her clients, from infants to older adults, and she is still going strong.

It all started when Darlene's mother was hired as a teacher's aide in 1976 at Catholic Charities' Holy Innocents Day Care Center in Buffalo. Later, Darlene's sister joined the team, and at the tender age of 18, Darlene followed in their footsteps.

Catholic Charities nurtured Darlene's growth, supporting her education as a childcare aide, and later her career advancement. In late 2011, Darlene transitioned from working with children to assisting adults and families in a new role with the food pantries. As a pantry outreach specialist, she now oversees five Erie County pantries, manages 35 volunteers, and ensures food accessibility for all.

One of Darlene's greatest joys is to see her clients overcome some of life's most challenging moments:

"Catholic Charities has been here to pick people up and to say, 'together we can do it.' They have

pulled [up] so many people, when they feel empty," she said. "A lot of times, those same people go back out, and they pay it forward by giving. So it is an organization that teaches other people to reach past yourself and give."

Along with nonperishable foods, meats, produce, and baked goods, clients at the Lovejoy Food Pantry on North Ogden Street take home the freshest produce, thanks to a community garden on-site.

Last spring, Tend and Buffalo River Compost, a division of NOCO, donated five yards of compost, which fed an array of vegetable plants and fruit bushes. Darlene and her team, as well as those in the community, tend the garden during the summer. The garden also offers life lessons to those who enjoy its harvest.

"There's always a teachable moment, from tasting new vegetables for the first time to now learning the benefits of utilizing compost in the garden," says Darlene. "Our garden has brought the community closer together through food and conversation."

Darlene is optimistic about Catholic Charities' next 100 years.

"My hope is that we will continue to grow; that whatever we are faced with, we take on the challenge and see it to the end," she said. "And maybe in the next 100 years, we'll stamp out hunger."

2012



A food pantry in Wellsville becomes the agency's seventh pantry. Later, the pantry was named Joyce Family Food Pantry, honoring the family's generous support.

Committed to Serve with Quality

Although total numbers served within our programs—our organization's reach through the services we provide and across geographics and demographics—tell a story, there is more. Do we serve well enough to move our clients to refer a friend or family member to us?

Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a measure used to gauge client loyalty, satisfaction, and enthusiasm. The NPS is designed to indicate a client's willingness to recommend an organization's services to others. It has been a key touch point with our clients for years to help ensure we are living our mission and values.

In an effort to provide a more engaging survey and to glean information to help improve our programs, Catholic Charities' survey going forward will measure the quality of service, a mission-based outcome metric, and the NPS.

79.3% **Our avg. net promoter score**
★★★ *NPS industry benchmark: 58%*

Satisfaction Rates

All Industries
79-83%
Our Clients
95%+

Most Notable

Pantry Clients
99%
Rich Street Clinic
100%
Ladies of Charity Store
100%

How We Serve WNY



Basic Needs
24,654



Behavioral Health
8,270



Education & Workforce Training
1,097



Family Safety & Stabilization
4,375



Food Pantries & WIC
98,161



Immigration & Refugee Assistance
1,085



In-School Counseling & Support
6,392



Older Adults Support
1,170



Total Served 145,204

Financial Stewardship

July 2022-June 2023

TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Grants & Contracts

Annual Appeal

Service Fees

Philanthropy and In-Kind Contributions

\$34,295,734

\$16,446,743

\$8,110,954

\$6,446,818

\$3,291,219

TOTAL EXPENSES

Program Expenses

Administration Expenses

Fundraising Expenses

\$33,727,997

\$27,460,758

\$4,639,082

\$1,628,157

For more, see ccwny.org/financial-information.

The Annual Appeal:

A Tradition of HOPE

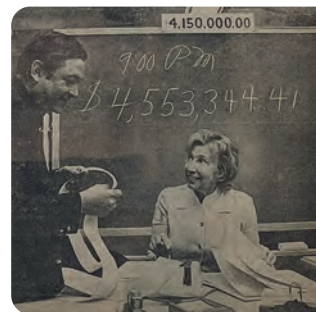
The annual Appeal has played a crucial role in the ongoing success of Catholic Charities since the first campaign was conducted in 1924. The Appeal helps leverage government contracts and other funding, and it is a key component for funding and sustaining programs for both Catholic Charities and the diocesan Fund for the Faith. Since the first Appeal raised \$325,808, collectively hundreds of thousands of donors have contributed more than half a billion dollars to support our neighbors in need across Western New York.

The theme for Appeal 2023 was HOPE for All Seasons, reflecting the long-held agency tagline. Catholic Charities is dedicated to ensuring HOPE remains a constant across all seasons of life and through all seasons of life's challenges.

Catholic Charities is fortunate to have a tradition of drawing inspired community and faith leaders to

champion the Appeal, and this year was no exception. Adam Sumlin, PhD, who chaired the Appeal and led his team, endeavored to introduce to donors the faces of the people Catholic Charities helps. The fifth annual HOPE Day on May 17 brought in a record \$507,456 in just 24 hours. Several companies, including Energy Mark and Thomann Asphalt Paving, provided matching donations.

Appeal 2023, the 99th in history, concluded with an impressive \$9,124,024.89, allowing the campaign to meet 96% of its \$9.5 million goal. The 100th Appeal is on the horizon and promises to continue the legacy of caring for which Western New York is known.



Celebrating Catholic Charities Centennial

Leading into the official Centennial of October 30, 1923, Catholic Charities of Buffalo held a series of events beginning in November 2022 to mark 100 years of commitment to Western New York. A luncheon at the Pearl at the Web in downtown Buffalo launched the milestone events. During the luncheon, President and CEO Deacon Steve Schumer reflected on Catholic Charities' distinguished past, highlighted current achievements, and discussed plans for the centennial year and beyond. David Rogers, distinguished, longtime donor and volunteer, spoke about the impact of Catholic Charities from his perspective.

A HOPE for the 100th Personal Care Items Drive was held in March. Students at area Catholic schools and community members collected essential items such as shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, and lotion for our clients. These basic products are vital and costly, and many neighbors in need often must choose between food and personal care items. Students engaged in a friendly competition to collect the highest number of items. St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute in Buffalo and LaSalle Early Childcare Center in Niagara Falls came out on top. Ultimately,

Catholic Charities' clients across Western New York were the recipients of donations of more than 5,000 items.

In August, Catholic Charities Women Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program hosted its annual Healthy Baby Festivals in Chautauqua, Erie, and Niagara counties. The three events, held in celebration of World Breastfeeding Week, joined forces with local agencies to share information and resources with parents and caretakers on breastfeeding, infant care, and healthy living. Magician Nick Mambretti and visits by larger-than-life costumed characters delighted the children.

As the curtain was drawn on the special events with the Centennial Mass and Celebration at Seneca One Tower at the end of October, a heartfelt thank you was extended to Catholic Charities' donors, volunteers, partners, and employees. Your support and efforts are instrumental to fulfilling the agency's mission. Stepping into the next 100 years, relationships in the community will continue to be built, and HOPE will continue to be extended to those in need.



1920s



1950s



1970s



Late 1990–Present

Early versions of the Catholic Charities of Buffalo logo featured our region and services with the images of a buffalo and food as well as the scripture, "Charity Never Falleth away." Nearing 50 years, the agency introduced the concept of HOPE for all seasons.

A History of HOPE

1923

Catholic Charities of Buffalo is incorporated and joins 16 institutions serving the frail elderly and children. First diocesan director: Monsignor John Carr.

1936

Great Depression winter: 26,074 men, women, and children assisted; 3,491 children cared for in 11 childcare agencies; and 594 elderly men and women provided homes.

1957

First Monsignor Carr Institute (behavioral health services) site opens and assists 250+ people in its first month.

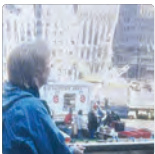


1983

The Foster Grandparent Program, a federal SeniorCorps program, starts in Erie County at Catholic Charities.

1986

Catholic Charities provides WIC services to low-income women and their children in Niagara County.



2001

Five counselors assist at Ground Zero in New York City.

2012

Immigration and Refugee Assistance Program housed in former Catholic parish campus on Buffalo's West Side.

2018

Glynn Family Services Center in Niagara Falls opens with several services in renovated former school of Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph Parish.

2022

Food pantries send nearly 43,000 pounds of food and basic-needs items to help the community following mass shooting at Tops Friendly Market in Buffalo.

1928

Services expand to Niagara County; grows to 20 organizations.

1951

Catholic Charities moves to 525 Washington Street in downtown Buffalo, with intake services, counseling, and outreach.

1977

All 15 offices remain open after Blizzard of '77; \$60,000 in food and assistance in distributed.



1985

Office of Manpower helps people affected by industrial layoffs transition their skills. A program for seniors assists them with new technology.

1994

New Bailey-Broadway site in Buffalo offers counseling and emergency assistance for Buffalo's East Side, Man-To-Man Domestic Violence Program for Men and Therapeutic Supervised Visitation.

2009

The Montante Family donates 741 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, for use as administrative offices. Catholic Charities becomes WIC sponsor across Erie County.

2015

Becomes sponsor for WIC program in Chautauqua County. Food pantries open in Getzville and Franklinville.

2020

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the nine food pantries distribute 48,000 bags of food, curbside. Remote telehealth service allowed therapists to continue safely providing counseling.



2023

Angela's House and Noles Court units open, providing homeless adults 55+ with a new apartment and case management services.

Our Services by County



Allegany

- Basic Needs
- Care Coordination
- Family Safety & Stabilization

Cattaraugus

- Basic Needs
- Care Coordination
- Family Safety & Stabilization

Chautauqua

- Basic Needs
- Family Safety & Stabilization
- In-School Counseling & Support
- Women Infants & Children (WIC)

Erie

- Basic Needs
- Behavioral Health Services
- Care Coordination
- Education & Workforce Training
- Family Safety & Stabilization
- Immigration & Refugee Assistance
- In-School Counseling & Support
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Older Adults Support
- Women Infants & Children (WIC)

Genesee

- Basic Needs
- Family Safety & Stabilization
- In-School Counseling & Support
- Older Adults Support

Niagara

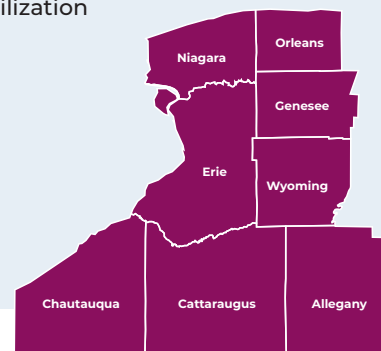
- Basic Needs
- Behavioral Health Services
- Care Coordination
- Family Safety & Stabilization
- In-School Counseling & Support
- Women Infants & Children (WIC)

Orleans

- Basic Needs
- Family Safety & Stabilization
- Older Adults Support

Wyoming

- Basic Needs
- Family Safety & Stabilization



Ways to Support this Work

You can help us support your neighbors across Western New York in so many ways.



Online

Pledges and credit card donations can be made through our website: ccwny.org/donate.



Text

You can text **HOPE4WNY** to **44321**.



Noncash Donations

Donors also give appreciated stocks or mutual funds, a vehicle that's no longer needed, or real estate. For information on noncash donations, visit: ccwny.org/other-ways-to-give.



United Way

You may give through the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County by designating your gift to Catholic Charities of Buffalo.



Please, donate today by using the enclosed envelope, visiting ccwny.org/donate, or scanning the QR code with your smartphone. We are deeply grateful for your support!