

## FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS

### ATCHISON

502 Kansas Ave.  
Atchison, KS 66002  
913.367.5070

### HOPE DISTRIBUTION CENTER

1708 Steele Rd.  
Kansas City, KS 66106  
913.432.3141

### LAWRENCE

1525 West 6th St.  
Lawrence, KS 66044  
785.856.2694

### LEAVENWORTH

716 North 5th St.  
Leavenworth, KS 66048  
913.651.8060

### OLATHE

333 East Poplar  
Olathe, KS 66061  
913.782.4077

### OVERLAND PARK

9806 West 87th St.  
Overland Park, KS 66212  
913.384.6608

### TOPEKA

234 South Kansas Ave.  
Topeka, KS 66603  
785.233.6300

### WYCO (KCK)

600 Minnesota Ave.  
Kansas City, KS 66101  
913.621.1504

### ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

9720 West 87th St.  
Overland Park, KS 66212  
913.433.2100



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**Nearly \$7 million worth of food** distributed through our eight food pantries to those unable to afford the rising cost of groceries. (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)



## Food Shortages and Inflation Drive Hunger Crisis

With the rising cost of groceries, supply chain issues and an increase of those accessing our food pantries (**up 25% since February**), the demand to feed our neighbors in need is critical. At a time when food pantry visitors need us the most, our pantry shelves are growing empty. This summer **our donations were down almost 20%**. All our food pantries are experiencing a food drought.

As food costs rise, organizations like Catholic Charities experience two things: food donation shortages and increased costs from local food pantry suppliers. Due to lower donations, Catholic Charities and other local food pantries are forced to purchase, at higher prices, food from local and national food suppliers to ensure healthy options, equal quantities and culturally appropriate foods.

The rise in food prices disproportionately affects low-income households because low-income households spend more of their overall income on food. The lowest 20% of wage earners spend roughly 27% of their income on food, whereas the highest income quintile spends only 7% of their income on food (2020 Department of Agriculture/Institute for International Economics). "The rising costs of food leaves families with fewer financial reserves to absorb the increased expense," added Lauren Solidum, President & CEO.

**Can you help?** If every family picked up just one extra item during their routine trips to the grocery store, our pantries would have nearly 600,000 food items to share with our neighbors in need. This simple act of generosity makes an incredible impact. Visit [catholiccharitiesks.org/food-drives/](https://catholiccharitiesks.org/food-drives/) for more information on food drives happening near you and food items that our pantries need the most. Together, we can fight hunger one family at a time. ❖

# BREAKING Bread

FALL 2022

catholic  charities  
OF NORTHEAST KANSAS

## Shalom House Offers Renewed Sense of Hope



Services will include physical/mental health screenings, referrals to community partners; general education and literacy referrals for those in need; skills training and advanced higher education certifications and degrees through our St. Rita Workforce Program; and financial training through our Family Financial Transformations and Kansas Loan Pool Project programs. In addition, Shalom House residents will learn practical skills such as cooking their own meals, buying groceries, managing finances and paying bills.

In December, the doors of Shalom House will joyfully re-open as Shalom House Men's Transitional Living Program at Sanctuary of Hope in Kansas City, Kansas. Men experiencing homelessness will have a safe, dignified place to eat a hot meal, shower, sleep and, most importantly, engage in long-term programming that will change the trajectory of their lives leading them out of poverty once and for all.

At the new location, Shalom House will serve up to 60 men – a substantial increase from 24 in years past. Men will be referred to Shalom House through a variety of community partners and parishes. Each resident will go through an extensive review prior to entry. The revamped program will run over a course of 12 months with the ultimate resident goals of achieving permanent housing and employment; improved physical, mental and spiritual health; and a renewed sense of hope.

"We want to create a safe place for those individuals coming through our doors, one where they feel a sense of normalcy and support," said Tenesha Williams, Shalom House Program Director. "Our team understands the problem of homelessness and are very eager to be part of the solution."

"Catholic Charities is humbled to begin this next chapter of services and grateful to all who have made this opportunity possible," explained Lauren Solidum, President & CEO. "At Catholic Charities, our mission is to move those we serve from immediate crisis to self-sufficiency – what an incredible opportunity we have through Shalom House."

### About Sanctuary of Hope

- **Constructed in 1898**, the building has traditionally been a place for healing. Over its long history, it has served as an asylum for the mentally ill, a nursing home for the elderly, a shelter for Vietnamese refugees and eventually a spiritual retreat center.
- The **27,000-square-foot facility** is nestled in the heart of inner Kansas City, Kansas on **33 acres**, offering outdoor space for exercise, reflection and prayer.
- The building's interior features **30 sleeping rooms**, a fully equipped kitchen and dining room, fitness area, large gathering space, meeting rooms, offices and a chapel. ❖

### Addressing the Need



Kansas City, Kansas has the **second highest rate of homelessness making up 20% of the metro area homeless population.\***



Kansas City, Kansas has only **6% of the available facilities to provide immediate housing** and programming to move people experiencing homelessness to permanent housing and self-sufficiency.\*

\*Greater Kansas City Coalition to End Homelessness (GKC-CEH) report on the state of housing and homelessness in the Kansas City metropolitan area.



Lauren Solidum, President & CEO

*“...those who must leave everything, even their families, to escape from grave dangers should find the Church as a homeland where no one is a stranger” – Pope Benedict*



The Catholic Church is an advocate for life – all life, at every stage. The Church is called to respond to issues threatening the lives of its people. Refugee resettlement and the challenges of immigration are pro-life issues. Christ’s call is unchanging. His followers are obliged to

welcome the stranger with love. Jesus’s entire ministry was one of migration. His message one of love, welcome and salvation for all people.

Catholic Charities has been welcoming the stranger since the late 1970s. Most recently, with the help of our ecumenical and community partners, we have resettled more than 1,000 of our Afghan war heroes, who we embrace as our new neighbors. These families escaped extreme persecution after serving alongside our military to bring peace to their country.

Our Afghan neighbors were granted only a temporary stay in the rush to evacuate, which will expire in just a few months. Without a permanent solution, then the high likelihood that our country will send our neighbors, friends and coworkers back to Afghanistan exists. This is not the answer for them nor their family’s safety and well-being. You can help by learning more about the Afghanistan Adjustment Act at: [uscbb.org](https://uscbb.org).

The refugee resettlement, immigration and citizenship efforts of Catholic Charities allow individuals and families to celebrate their heritage and their homeland while building on their skills and talents to be shared in the U.S. Our programs expose the beautiful diversity of our world and bring education and awareness needed to bridge gaps between cultures and communities.

My prayer is that our communities remain places where we welcome and embrace our differences and acknowledge the contributions that all cultures have made for the good of those who live and work here. ❖

## St. Rita Program Helps Nurse Fulfill her Passion

April’s desire to become a nurse began when she was 20 years old. A supply clerk in a nursing home, she dreamt she was holding the hand of a resident who was dying. She knew then that she had a special calling to nursing.



**Over 100 individuals** boosted their job skills and advanced their education through our St. Rita Workforce Program, including **16 graduates** who attained their academic or certification credentials. (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)

After becoming a full-time nurse, her passion for caring for patients and educating them about their health continued to grow. It drove her to want to further her education and pursue a degree as a Family Nurse Practitioner. That path, however, was filled with barriers for this working, 40-year-old mother of five. “I knew that if I decided to go back to school, there would be major sacrifices for my family,” she said. “I was uncertain how we would survive on one income.”

Through a friend, April learned about Catholic Charities’ St. Rita Workforce Program and decided to apply. The skills building program operates in partnership with Kansas City Kansas Community College, Johnson County Community College, University of St. Mary’s (Leavenworth) and Donnelly College. In addition to the educational support, the program assists participants with basic needs that can become major challenges for someone pursuing an academic degree or certification.

“Not only did the program provide financial support while I was in school and unable to work, but there were so many encouraging people rooting for me,” she said. “There were several days, I am certain, that we wouldn’t have had meals if it weren’t for the Catholic Charities food pantry.”

April, who successfully passed her boards, is incredibly grateful for the St. Rita program and those who support it. “Without God’s grace and your generosity, I would not have been able to accomplish one of the most challenging goals in my life,” added April. ❖

## Military Base Partners in Battle Against Hunger

More often than not our rural Family Support Center (FSC) pantries struggle to receive as many food donations as our metropolitan locations. During a time when food droughts are rampant, FSC managers must get creative to offset a critical decline in donations.

A unique partner to our Leavenworth FSC has been the Fort Leavenworth Commissary. While only active, reserve, or retired uniformed service members can shop at the commissary, non-profit, charitable food banks qualify to receive donations of edible yet unsellable food. Instead of taking it to the dumpster, unused or unsellable items in the commissary are donated to our rural food pantry as part of the FSC’s weekly food rescue mission. During these food rescue missions, volunteers go to area grocery stores to pick-up soon-to-be-expired emergency supplies for the food pantry.

“The commissary has donated to us eggs, whole chickens, and even freezer items. The number of items we receive is incredible. We are fortunate to be this close to the post,” said Jackie Masoner, Leavenworth FSC Manager. ❖



**1.6 million lbs. in food donations** received from individuals, parishes, schools, grocery store rescue and community partners. (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)

## Barriers Facing Pregnant Women

Many women face obstacles when trying to obtain prenatal care. It is often expensive and inconvenient if a woman is uninsured or lacks transportation. Since 2016, our Pregnancy Maintenance Initiative (PMI) has helped women overcome barriers to healthcare.



**53 pregnant women** received counseling, education, community referrals and over **\$12,000 worth of donated baby items** including clothing, diapers, blankets, bottles and more. (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)

PMI guides a woman throughout all stages of pregnancy. Case managers assist with scheduling appointments for exams and well-child visits. Interpretative services are also available. Confidential counseling provides information regarding parenting and adoption options, in addition to community referrals and support.

Education and assistance go beyond the pregnancy term. Donations from the community supply essentials like diapers, car seats, and clothing. Case managers help women apply to WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Nutrition Program, HappyBottoms™ (a program alleviating diaper need), and other aids that will assist them.

“It’s so exciting when an expecting mother once was anxious and is now growing into her motherhood,” said Heather Roberts, LMSW, Manager of Adoption and Pregnancy Counseling. ❖

## Duplex Offers Homeless Families Refuge

It may look like any other duplex on the street, but this home is a 90-day transitional living program for families experiencing homelessness. The city of Olathe owns the duplex, while Catholic Charities maintains the property and its residents. It has been part of our ministry for 20+ years.



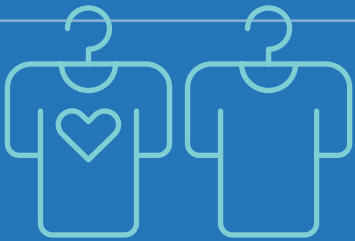
The duplex is fully-furnished with two-bedrooms, a living room, dining area, kitchen, bathroom, and washer/dryer. The home is stocked with supplies, and when a family moves in, they receive a welcome basket.

To qualify, families must be currently homeless. There must be one adult and up to two children who are enrolled in the Olathe School District. No more than two children and two adults can reside.

Residents do not pay rent or utilities. They utilize the Olathe Family Support Center (FSC) food pantry weekly, to supplement regular grocery shopping. Residents also undergo case management, where they identify goals with a case manager. Goals focus on employment, paying off debt, and establishing a budget. In addition, families and children work with the Olathe School District’s McKinney-Vento homeless liaison. Together they coordinate transportation, lunches, and class schedules. Children also receive a free backpack, filled with supplies they will need.

Once residents have completed the 90-day program, they are self-sufficient. Adults obtain jobs and secure their next home. If they are unable to do so, one 30-day extension is allowed. No one has ever gone back to homelessness.

“I have seen amazing life transformations occur, and I am inspired by these families’ determination and resiliency. At one time or another, it benefits our homeless population to be given a second chance at a new beginning,” said Olathe FSC Manager, Jennifer White. ❖



## Morning Glory Estate Sales Ready for Launch

It all began with an agency-wide pitch to find our next social enterprise. “After the success of TurnStyles Thrift Stores, we knew that we needed to invest in ourselves to generate more funds to support our various ministries and further supplement the generosity of our donors,” said Keith Kennedy, Vice President, Supply Chain.

Estate sales was selected as our next business venture. The ministry’s goal will be three-fold: to employ vulnerable populations, mobilize supporters to help serve out our mission, and generate a positive net margin.

Although there are other estate sales in the area, our approach is unique. Items we cannot sell through the ministry will be donated to families in need through our Refugee & Immigration Services program and Family Support Centers. Items will also be sold through TurnStyles brick and mortars, eBay, or at an off-site auction.

“Estate sales can be emotional. We are going to treat people and their belongings with dignity and respect, imitating Christ in all that we do. As good stewards, we will strive to maximize the return to clients who support our efforts, while also providing good value to people who may not be able to afford to shop at major retailers,” said Kennedy.

The goal is to launch this business in early 2023. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Ginger Jackson, [gjackson@catholiccharitiesks.org](mailto:gjackson@catholiccharitiesks.org), or Keith Kennedy, [kkennedy@catholiccharitiesks.org](mailto:kkennedy@catholiccharitiesks.org). ❖

Get the latest news about Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas delivered straight to your inbox!

Go to [catholiccharitiesks.org](https://catholiccharitiesks.org) and sign up for our monthly e-Newsletter which highlights our programs, upcoming events and ways you can help make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

We serve our neighbors, of all faiths, through *Help, Hope, and Hospitality*