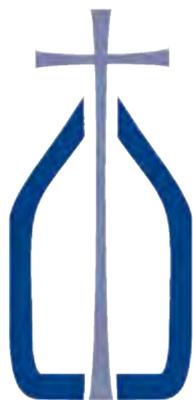




A Call to Mercy

Annual Report 2015-2016



**Catholic
Charities
North Dakota**

Helping People, Changing Lives.

Bishop Kagan Bismarck Diocese



Photo by Deacon Joe Krupinsky

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Catholic Charities serves as an example of the necessary charitable apostolate of the Church. I am encouraged to see the wonderful response to the Catholic Charities North Dakota video. Their work is one of the best-kept secrets of the Church that shouldn't be kept a secret.

Catholic Charities North Dakota focuses on what is really important. Its essence is to care for those who are most in need, the poor and vulnerable among us. It is Christ who finds them, who the people see, and who lifts them up. During this time of great cultural uncertainty it is important that we stay true to our

values and do not compromise Church social teachings.

With your support, it is my hope that Catholic Charities North Dakota will serve the poor, the homeless, the jobless, and the psychologically distressed with the love of Christ. Our focus is the poor and the most vulnerable, who are loved especially by Christ.

Thank you to the Board, Staff and supporters of Catholic Charities North Dakota for your love of Christ in North Dakota, your willingness to extend yourselves to increase understanding and bring others to understand Catholic Charities North Dakota as Bishop Folda and I do, and all others who are involved with Catholic Charities North Dakota.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

†Most Reverend Bishop David Kagan

Bishop Folda Fargo Diocese

Dear friends in Christ,

This report gives an overview of the work that Catholic Charities North Dakota has done over the past year, and it is an invitation to promote the growth and work of Catholic Charities. As Christians, serving those in need is not just one more thing we do, it is part of our “DNA”. This is true for every follower of Christ, who told us to “Love one another as I have loved you” (Jn 13:34).

Jesus identifies with every person in need: “Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me...” (Mt. 25:40). Rather than keep our distance and stay uninvolved, Pope Francis asks us to look the other person in the face and recognize Christ in them. During the Pope’s visit to Catholic Charities in Washington, D.C., he told clients and staff that “Charity is born of the call of a God who continues to knock on our door, the door of all people, to invite us to love, to compassion, to service of one another.”

From its beginning, charity has been a part of the life of the Church. In the Acts of the Apostles we read that the faithful would bring contributions to the apostles to be distributed to those in need. Today, Catholic Charities is the charitable arm of the local church, with a special leadership role in charity and service, especially with programs that cannot be done by individual parishes.

My hope is that Catholic Charities can be a catalyst for charitable activity in parishes throughout North Dakota, drawing the faithful more actively into new opportunities for charity. Thank you for your support of this work, and may all our brothers and sisters in faith join in the mission of Catholic Charities North Dakota.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



†Most Reverend John T. Folda

Executive Director

Charity- More than Handouts



Charity is more than giving handouts or even just providing basic necessities (money, food, clothing, shelter). Serving others is a key component of all faiths – so intertwined with religious worship that to eliminate the ability to work together in charitable actions is to eliminate the ability to worship God.

To understand a charity's impact, we ask what difference has the charity made in the world? Catholic Charities North Dakota emerged more than 90 years ago working with and helping the orphaned and the vulnerable. Today Catholic Charities reaches out to help adults with intellectual disabilities, pregnant women seeking to provide a loving, stable home for their children, couples yearning for a child, and the infant or child in need of the love and long-term support of a family. These are examples of how Catholic Charities North Dakota has impacted our little corner of the world.

Yet there is so much more to accomplish. One specific area in need of attention is the elderly in need of support: a loving hand, a watchful eye, a kind word. Through caring guardianship, the elderly could rest knowing someone is there acting in their best interest. Catholic Charities is considering how we can be of service and a resource in this area.

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory . . . he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.”

“Then the King will say to those on his right, . . . For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” (Mt. 25:31-36)

Now is the time to determine if you will be a sheep or a goat. Become involved with Catholic Charities North Dakota, and together we will do more.

God Bless,


Dianne Nechiporenko

Board of Directors



L. Joe Fry



Steven Lies

Photos by Deacon Joe Krupinsky

Bishop John T. Folda, *Diocese of Fargo*

Bishop David D. Kagan, *Diocese of Bismarck*

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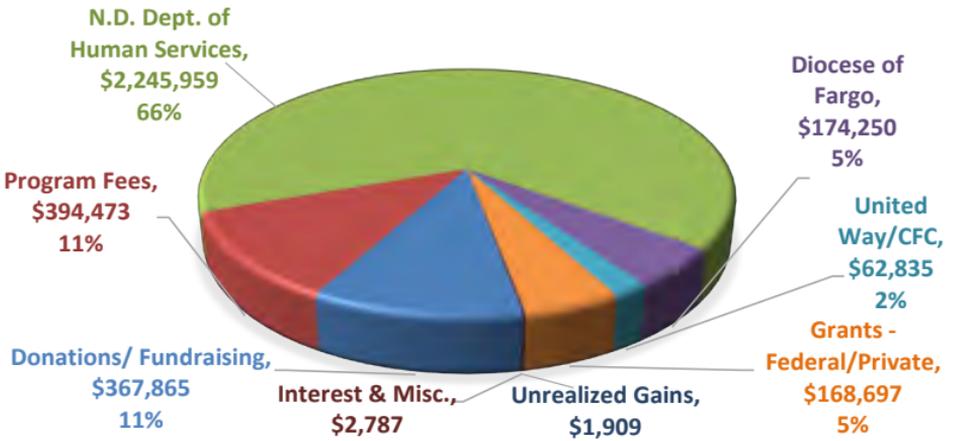
Bismarck

Diane Weir

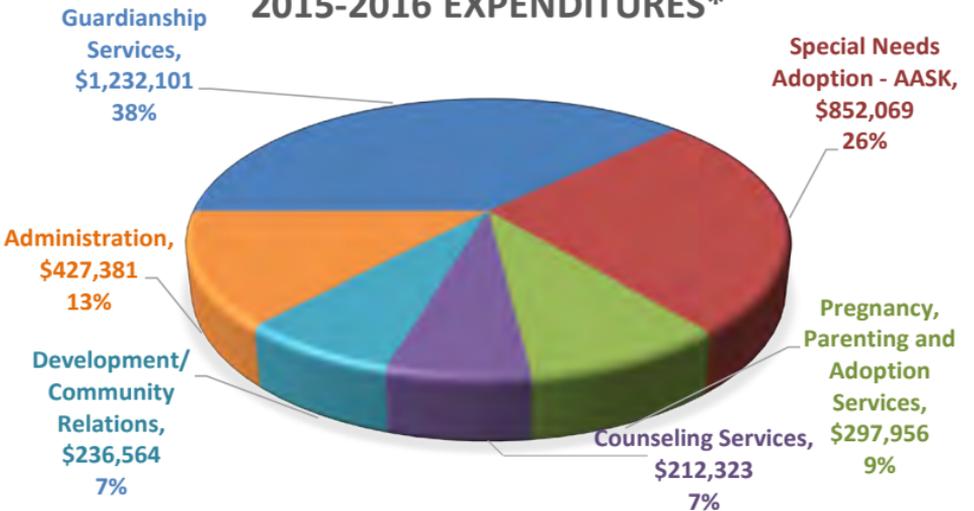
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Finances

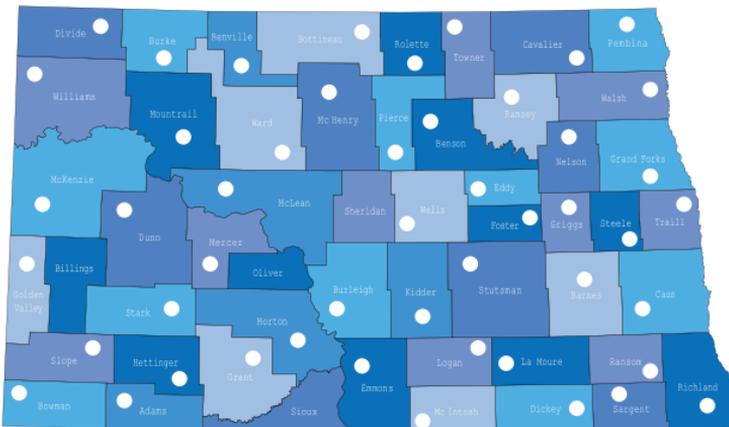
2015-2016 REVENUES*



2015-2016 EXPENDITURES*



*Please note that these charts include pre-audited numbers.



More than 2,350 clients served and countless more reached.

Dots signify the 49 of 53 counties in North Dakota where people received direct services from us in 2015-2016.

Year in Review



Catholic
Charities
North Dakota

Helping People, Changing Lives.

Thank you, thank you, thank you to our friends and supporters for making this a year of success! We were blessed with new events and new supporters whose donations made it possible for us to serve even more clients than in 2014-2015. We made great progress, but the challenges of raising awareness of our agency and programs and increasing private support from individuals and businesses remain.

As an agency, our biggest achievement was hosting Catholic Charities Sunday the last weekend in September. The reaction to our short video was humbling. A number of people told us after how Catholic Charities had impacted their own lives. We were blessed to receive many generous donations from supporters like you. Equally important, the number of people served rose due in part to a greater awareness of our services—so thanks for telling others in need about us too!

This spring we were pleased to honor Deacon Jim and Henrietta Nistler as our Caritas Award Recipients during a luncheon hosted by Spirit of Life Church in Mandan, ND to recognize the Nistlers' volunteer work with the African Mission of the Bismarck Diocese. Catholic Charities itself was honored as a "Rising Star" for its success with Giving Hearts Day. We were also blessed by those who faithfully support our annual Christmas and Easter appeals. Our programs for those in need are only possible with your gifts.

One recent change is the conversion of many members of our newsletter list from print to email. If you haven't already, please send us your email address to help save costs and save trees. This year we are redesigning our website to add greater information and make it more mobile-friendly and easy to use. We are also creating a new video for our second Catholic Charities Sunday on September 24-25th!

The AASK program is a collaboration between Catholic Charities North Dakota and Path ND, Inc. that finds permanent and stable homes for children in foster care in North Dakota.

156

Youth adoptions
finalized

13

Finalized youth in
tribal custody

40

Sibling groups
finalized together

80

Approved home
assessments

28

Children being
recruited for

719

Children received
AASK services

If you are interested in
learning more about
adoption please contact
us at 701-235-4457.



AASKND.ORG



The Challenging Journey to a Forever Home

Sometimes being a child isn't easy. In fact, it can be very scary and full of anxiety. Such was the experience of four western North Dakota siblings, ages 4, 5, 6, 7, whose birth parents were unable to meet their needs. Fortunately, they were referred to our Adults Adopting Special Kids (AASK) Program. After one of our Wendy's Wonderful Kids workers completed a recruitment search for possible adoptive parents, relatives were located in South Carolina. Amazingly these relatives expressed interest in adopting these children even though they had never met them. They hadn't had contact with the children's father since he had left the state many years earlier.

The relatives came to North Dakota to meet the children and committed to adopt them. Phone calls, cards, gifts, and web chat sessions followed. The family needed to add onto their home and the children would be welcome.

Adopting Special Kids



Gradually the contact decreased. Then finally the relatives admitted that they were no longer willing to adopt the children. Imagine how crushing this experience would be for a child.

Next the children were placed in the home of someone who had expressed interest in adopting them. After the children had been placed with her for several months she realized she was unable to meet their needs due to aggressive and acting out behaviors in the two oldest. Although she understood that these behaviors were likely fueled by uncertainty and anxiety, she reluctantly asked that the two oldest children be removed.

In our AASK program separating these children from their siblings was not an option. The professionals brainstormed a way to keep the children together with as few more moves as possible.

Every move causes additional suffering for children, and this just contributed to their anxiety and acting out behaviors. Thus a single, very skilled foster parent was approached with the plan to place the children in her home with enhanced support for transportation, day care, and respite breaks. She agreed to give the plan a try.

After a few months the children, now aged 6, 7, 8, 9, asked her to adopt them. She loved the children, understood their difficult behaviors were related to the trauma of their past experiences, and approached AASK to complete an Adoptive Home Assessment for her. The children's custodial team agreed that this was an excellent plan for the children and the adoption was finalized in a National Adoption Day celebration!

Year in Review

Our clinical therapists are licensed professionals who work with individuals, couples, and families. Issues related to relationships, stress, anxiety, depression, loss, anger and spiritual concerns are among the many reasons people seek therapy. The number of sessions a client receives varies based on their situation.

448

Clients served

2,154

Counseling sessions

318

New clients

207

Marriage prep
couples

Our counselors are currently in Fargo, Langdon, and Wahpeton and looking to expand to our Grand Forks and Bismarck/Minot offices.

The Fargo office welcomed a new therapist Marjorie Baumgartner-Hill to the team. She has over 25 years of experience working with children, adolescents and adults.

Counseling



Picking up the Pieces

Sara and Todd* had a newly blended family, with four young children, heavy work obligations, the strain of balancing a budget, and an urgent need to set boundaries with Todd's drug and alcohol abusing sister, who attended college in their community. To deal with these stressful situations, Sara and Todd contacted Catholic Charities North Dakota about couples counseling. Like many couples facing conflicting obligations, Sara and Todd didn't know what to do. How could they respond with love and care to family members in need while doing what's best in their primary responsibility as spouses and parents, to strengthen their own relationship and care for young children?

In therapy, Sara and Todd learned to evaluate how they were helping Todd's sister. They pinpointed things that were helpful, including having her over for a



family meal each week, inviting her to family events, and encouraging her to seek addiction treatment.

Sara and Todd also gained a better understanding of how they were enabling his sister which shielded her from the consequences of her own behavior. For example, they had paid some of her debts and bailed her out of jail. They also recognized the enormous pressure they felt from Todd's parents and other siblings to monitor his sister.

Once Sara and Todd agreed on the positive things they could do for his sister, and the enabling behaviors to avoid, they were more comfortable setting boundaries. Through couples therapy they worked to put the Gospel into action without violating healthy boundaries with other family members.

For my part, it was a blessing and

an inspiration to work with this couple. They faced the crisis of the moment, dealing with tough issues with insight and love, and put into operation a plan that worked to build a stronger marriage and a more supportive family life. Finally, I want to share with you that this couple expressed great appreciation for Catholic Charities North Dakota and its policy to accept payment for services based on their ability to pay. Unfortunately, couples therapy is not covered under most insurance policies. Your support really makes a difference!

*Not actual names

Our professional staff serve as court-appointed guardians for adults with intellectual disabilities to ensure they have an appropriate place to live, receive proper medical attention and can obtain necessary support services.

472

Individuals served
by our guardians

111,698

Miles driven to 35 towns

8,364

Visits with wards
at their homes

24,981

Case contacts on
behalf of wards

2,749

Meetings on
behalf of wards

1,054

responses to
emergency situations

Donna Rae Cotton, a guardianship worker who has been with the agency for 20 years, was able to retire this June. She will enjoy more family time in her retirement as she moved to the Seattle area to be closer to them. Thank you, Donna, for your years of service to the clients you have served and the agency.

Marie- Living a Fulfilling Life

Marie* had fallen through the cracks. She received developmental disabilities services at one time, but, being her own guardian, she ended those services and attempted to live independently in the community. Marie became isolated, stopped visiting her sister in the nursing home, and only left her apartment to do a little shopping.

In addition, Marie had a long history of swelling in her legs which led to open sores and weeping infections. The public bus system refused to serve her due to the oozing from her legs. She was even reported to Adult Protective Services (APS) for not taking care of herself.

When APS stepped in, they found Marie's small apartment filled with old newspapers, empty food cans, and trash - a classic hoarder situation. The open sores on her legs were infected and heavily weeping. Eventually Marie did agree to go to the hospital. Doctors said that if treatment wasn't started soon, Marie's legs would need to be amputated. Marie refused treatment, claiming, "The doctors are just after my money!" A psychiatrist was consulted and prescribed medication to help with her delusions and paranoia. Marie refused those as well saying, "Everyone is just trying to control me! If you leave me alone, I'll be fine!" It was clear to everyone, except Marie unfortunately, that she was not fine.

Services



With no other family, Catholic Charities North Dakota was appointed by the Court, first as an emergency guardian and then as a permanent guardian for Marie. Marie's guardianship worker from Catholic Charities North Dakota quickly gave consent for the needed medical procedures and Marie's long road to recovery finally began. With appropriate medication and support, Marie's mental health issues were addressed. She slowly began to trust people again and allow them to help her.

Our Guardianship Worker, with the help of the Developmental Disabilities Program Manager, was

able to find a new home for Marie that provided the supervision and support she needed to take care of her medical and mental health issues. Instead of being isolated from it, Marie is now an active member of her local community. She loves volunteering, attending school music programs, and visiting her sister regularly. With help from Catholic Charities North Dakota, Marie is once again healthy and happy. With your continued support, Catholic Charities North Dakota's guardianship program will keep being able to impact the lives of vulnerable and at-risk persons.

*Not actual name

Year in Review

Our licensed social workers work with women and men who are unprepared for pregnancy, offering them education and support including parenting resources and adoption information for their child. Staff also work with those interested in adoption, offering options to adopt from North Dakota, out of state or internationally.

26

Pregnancy
counseling clients

10

In-state
infant placements

1

Out-of-state
infant placement

3

Identified adoptions

34

Post-adoption searches

10

International adoptions:
(2) Philippines, (4) China,
(2) India, (1) Bulgaria,
(1) Ukraine

In April, we welcomed the new PPAS Director, Kris Haycraft, who was previously with Youthworks in Fargo. Her energy and enthusiasm makes her a great addition to our team!

Pregnancy,



What Can a Pair of Moccasins Mean?

Courtney, a young Native American woman, was expecting twins. Though she loved these babies from the moment she found out she was expecting, Courtney knew that she was not ready now to provide them the life she dreamt about giving her children. Courtney contacted Catholic Charities North Dakota to meet with a social worker about her options and ultimately chose to make an adoption plan for her twin boys. Many would think that this is where her journey would end, but making an adoption plan was the start of a new and wonderful chapter in her life!

Courtney selected Dennis and Megan Bolda as the adoptive parents for her children. In their first meeting it was clear that God had brought

Parenting and Adoption Services



them together; as they discussed names for the children, amazingly they had the same names in mind which had special meaning to both of the families.

Courtney's mom made moccasins for the boys and it was with great joy that she was able to give the tiny moccasins to the Boldas, symbolizing the joining of their families, the sharing of Native American traditions and the gift of life that had been given through adoption to this family.

The Boldas feel very blessed to be parents of twins and are excited to immerse their new family in the

Native American culture as these two families have become one.

From sitting together in the hospital telling stories and welcoming the babies, to celebrating the boys' baptism, these two families will continue to laugh and share together as the boys grow. You can play a part in stories like these! With your donation to the Pregnancy, Parenting and Adoption Services Program, more women who are experiencing unintended pregnancies can be given the opportunity to make life-changing decisions like this. It may be the start of a new and wonderful journey for them and their children!



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