Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The call to charity is an essential part of our Christian lives, and we are all called to be attentive to the needs of our brothers and sisters. Catholic Charities is the charitable arm of the Church in North Dakota, and for many decades has been involved in the lives of the people of our state, Catholic and non-Catholic alike.

We invite you to participate in the great mission of Catholic Charities. It’s not only about money, but your generous financial support enables those who are actively involved in the charitable work of the Church to assist the people who are most in need. We invite all the faithful and all those of like mind to join us in the work of charity, the work of mercy that Catholic Charities has been all about for so long. We ask you to pray for this work, and to support it with your resources to the extent you are able. Please join us in reaching out to all God’s children wherever they may be. Thank you, and God bless you all!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Most Reverend John T. Folda
Bishop of Fargo

+Most Reverend David D. Kagan
Bishop of Bismarck
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When God finished creating the world He said it was, “Very good.” His intent for His creation was for it to flourish. Christianity provides not merely a set of values or a vision that we should pursue and which thereby promises flourishing; it provides the heart cure and renewal in our souls that enables us to actually pursue and experience flourishing.

The biblical view of flourishing can only be achieved because we receive from outside of ourselves- salvation imparted to us by God’s Holy Spirit, which restores our original relationship with the creator. It encompasses all of our being, including our material, psychological, spiritual and emotional aspects.

The Lord bless you and keep you, The Lord make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace (shalom).

I have observed Catholic Charities North Dakota flourish greatly in the four years that I have been here. We recently expanded our counseling program to begin serving Dickinson, Bismarck and Minot; we have added 20 more available slots to Guardianship for the individuals with intellectual disabilities and we have added a staff person to assist the AASK program in Devils Lake. Our clients and staff have flourished through the great works guided by God above.

Although we have flourished there are those among us who have not. We continue to receive requests on a daily basis for rent, utilities, medical bills, transportation, fuel, food and many more of our basic needs. We are unable to meet the majority of these needs. There is an aging population among us who have needs such as companionship, transportation, financial direction, and guardianship. Relatives, pastors, and neighbors call asking for services of which we currently do not provide.

Without you they cannot flourish! Without you we cannot help them flourish!

God Bless,

Dianne Nechiporenko
The goal of this Annual Report is to provide information about the health of our programs and finances at Catholic Charities North Dakota. In these pages you will see a snapshot of our income and expenses, an update from the director of each program, and information about the services provided this year.

The goal of our agency is to fulfill our mission: Guided by our values, Catholic Charities North Dakota serves people in need and advocates for the common good of all. Led by our volunteer Board of Directors we have updated our Strategic Plan with three primary directives to fulfill this mission.

The first strategic direction is to develop sustainable resources enabling Catholic Charities North Dakota to grow and build capacity for existing programs. To do this, we will continue to seek funding through local organizations and activities, assure that existing programs are fully funded, and support staff capacity and retention. Each of these objectives requires sufficient financial support.

The second strategic direction is to enhance services and programs to meet Catholic Charities North Dakota’s mission. This means identifying and serving additional vulnerable people in need and seeking collaborative efforts with others. Both require an openness within Catholic Charities, and help from outside.

The third strategic direction is to increase awareness and support for Catholic Charities North Dakota and its programs. We can do this by enhancing the Catholic Charities North Dakota identity with our own events such as Catholic Charities Sunday and the Caritas Award Luncheon, and by participating as speakers and sponsors at other community events.

The success of our agency depends on you. You as individuals, donors, and collaborative agencies make it possible to improve the lives of thousands of North Dakotans each year—and that’s what really matters. Thank you so much for taking the time to review the included material and your continued support of our efforts to serve those in need!
More than 2,350 clients served and countless more reached.

Dots signify the 51 of 53 counties in North Dakota where people received direct services from us in 2016-2017.
Your generosity in the Annual Appeal, Catholic Charities Sunday, and Giving Hearts Day helped us meet our budget for the second year in a row. We served more people than the year before, and our reach into rural and Western North Dakota continues to grow. By all accounts the 2016-17 fiscal year was another great success at Catholic Charities North Dakota!

All signs are trending upward and yet sometimes the words of our mission haunt me. I have no doubt that we are “Guided by our values” with the active involvement of the Bishops, pastors, and great people of North Dakota. We take our foundation as a faith-based organization seriously and strive to put into practice the social teachings of the Church. Our agency “serves people in need” with our adoption, counseling, and guardianship programs, and there are no bigger “advocates for the common good of all” than our social workers who look out for the best interests of children and adults with intellectual disabilities. But are we doing enough? Or is something more needed?

Let me suggest an answer. Maybe what’s missing is you and me. A couple of recent college graduates helped launch a series of “Mercy Works” educational service projects this year. A parish helped fund a new charity care program. Together we flourish. What can you and I do in 2017-18?

Chad Prososki is the Director of Development and Community Relations. If you want to do more to help others please email info@catholiccharitiesnd.org or call (701) 235-4457 to discuss your ideas!
The AASK program continues to work with children and families on adoption from foster care. We had another extremely busy year with 158 finalized adoptions, we approved 109 adoptive home assessments, and wrote 152 child adoptive assessments. There are many children waiting to be adopted. Some have a forever family identified, others do not, and in these cases we need to recruit a family who will be the best possible fit for the child. In order to find the best family for each one of these bright, brave, and beautiful children we need a pool of approved families who do not already have a child identified for adoption.

This coming year we will work even harder to build this pool. We are aware of the long waiting period for families who want to adopt. We are working hard to restructure and make changes so we can get to families sooner, especially in western North Dakota where the waiting period is the longest. Additionally, we have an excellent Post Adopt service available to all adoptive and guardianship families to provide support, information, and education beyond finalization. Visit NDpostadopt.org to check this out. Please also visit our AASK website or the ND Heart Gallery website for profiles of some of the most amazing children it would ever be your good fortune to meet.

If you are interested in learning more about adoption please email us at aask@catholiccharitiesnd.org or call us at 701-235-4457.
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.

109 Approved home assessments

31 Children being recruited for

767 Children received AASK services

158 Youth adoptions finalized

13 Finalized youth in tribal custody
Office Locations
Our counselors served in Fargo, Langdon, and Wahpeton this past fiscal year. New this coming year is Tami Christianson, LICSW who will be located in the Bismarck office and serve the areas of Minot and Dickinson.

Counselors
Jennifer Anderson, LICSW
Marjorie Baumgartner-Hill, LMFT, LPCC
Barb Boesl, LPC
Tami Christianson, LICSW
Carlyss Kurtti, LPCC, NCC

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.

378 Clients served
2,063 Counseling sessions
232 New clients
204 Marriage prep couples
Counseling Services

A huge thank you goes out to our donors for helping our CCND Counseling Department meet the mental health needs of our community this year. Without your help, we would not be able to offer counseling services to those who otherwise cannot pay for it. The work of our counselors is to guide clients in the restoration of hope, support people as they go through difficult life changes, facilitate healing in relationships, help to develop healthy coping skills, and provide mental health therapy. Meeting these needs is critical, regardless of how able people are to pay for the services.

This last year we facilitated 2,063 counseling sessions to individuals, couples and families for a variety of issues. We were able to accept 232 new clients and serve 378 total clients this year. We are blessed to have five caring and competent clinicians on board. Carlyss Kurtti, LPCC, LCC was hired as the Director of Counseling at the beginning of April and Tami Christianson, LICSW was hired as a clinical therapist in Bismarck, Dickinson, and Minot at the beginning of July. We are excited to have filled these positions with such skilled people!

We all know what it is like to struggle. Unfortunately, a number of people do not have people that provide support to them when they are sad, grieving, alone or struggling. Thank you again for giving back to our community and providing another way for people to get help. Please spread the word about our program! With faith and your support, no one will be denied counseling services when they are in need. When you can contribute, please do. God bless you.
The Guardianship Division recently celebrated 30 years of providing guardianship services on behalf of individuals with intellectual disabilities and, in that time, we have had the privilege of supporting and advocating for more than 900 people. During the past 12 months, our 14 guardianship workers have provided services to 467 individuals throughout North Dakota. Our guardianship workers work tirelessly to meet our clients’ needs and help them be as independent as possible.

The provision of quality services is closely tied to funding. The 2017 Legislature was very responsive as we received funding to increase our daily rate for services as well as funding for 20 new openings. The new openings will have an immediate impact because our guardianship waiting list has the names of more than 100 people with intellectual disabilities. Sadly, the remaining 80 people must wait for their name to come up on the list. Please know that if a person is in immediate risk of substantial harm, we will accept the emergency guardianship case even if we have reached our caseload capacity. As we look to the future, we will continue searching for the resources to reduce our waiting list so that those in need have access to our services in their time of need.
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.

- **20,719** Case contacts on behalf of wards
- **2,602** Meetings on behalf of wards
- **1,000** responses to emergency situations
- **467** Individuals served by our guardians
- **92,235** Miles driven to 35 towns
- **8,203** Visits with wards at their homes
The Pregnancy, Parenting, and Adoption Services program’s licensed social workers work with women and men experiencing an unintended pregnancy, offering them education and support including parenting resources and adoption information. Social workers also work with those interested in adoption, offering options to adopt from North Dakota, out of state or internationally.

31 Pregnancy counseling clients
8 In-state infant placements
3 Out-of-state infant placement

2 Identified adoptions
15 Post-adoption searches
2 International adoptions: China and Nigeria
3 ND infants placed out of state: Minnesota, California, Missouri
Last year was a great year for the Pregnancy, Parenting, and Adoption Services Program (PPAS). We served 31 pregnant women and their families who were experiencing an unintended pregnancy. As you can imagine, finding out that you are pregnant when you aren’t expecting it can be terrifying, overwhelming, and sometimes even shame producing. Catholic Charities North Dakota’s (CCND) PPAS social workers walk hand in hand with these women and their families to lessen the burden, reduce the fear, and to help make a life affirming plan for them and their babies. Sometimes the plan is adoption, where CCND social workers help the birth family select an adoptive family to raise the baby and offer support throughout this process. Sometimes the plan is to parent, and CCND social workers assist the family in securing all the needed supplies, skills, supports, and resources needed to be a great parent.

It is our hope that no woman would have to walk this journey alone, that every woman would know that choosing life for her baby can lead to beautiful new possibilities. With your support, no woman would feel the fear or shame of an unintended pregnancy without also knowing that a caring social worker is only a phone call away, someone who will walk with her, support her, and encourage her to do what is best for her and her baby. YOU can make this happen! YOU can join in our mission! YOU can contribute financially or donate needed baby supplies. Most importantly...YOU can start talking about the PPAS program so that anyone in need, in that often scary place can be supported to make a life affirming choice.