



PATRON

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES OF SOUTHERN NEBRASKA QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Farmer's Prayer to St. Joseph

O glorious St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus, you did provide for the Holy Family.

We commit to your protection our crops.

Intercede in our behalf with Almighty God, Who rules the seasons, so that our fields, being favored by the weather, may yield abundant crops that will allow us to supply the wants of life. Instill a love of the land into the hearts of our youth for their own salvation and that of Christian unity so that we may all share hereafter in the same blissful life you enjoy in heaven.

Amen.

Welcoming the stranger

CSS Refugee Resettlement team earns praise

"Violence sometimes obliges entire populations to leave their homeland to escape repeated atrocities... to seek ways to survive in distant lands, where it is not easy to find a suitable welcome."

-Pope John Paul II

Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska's legacy of welcoming the stranger can be traced back to 1940 when we assisted people who were displaced during the early days of World War II. Over the past 84 years, we have helped individuals and families from dozens of countries feel welcomed and provide them the resources needed to start a new life in a new land. As you'll read in our 2024 Quarter 1 Impact Report in this newsletter, our Refugee Resettlement Services staff welcomed 79 new arrivals in the first three months of this year.

Our Refugee Resettlement staff works closely

with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). During a recent onsite review, USCCB representatives reviewed case files and documentation and conducted home visits with families our staff have recently welcomed. The feedback they received from the families was overwhelmingly positive. One of the families told USCCB that the CSS staff treated them "like they were part of their family and they didn't feel there was really any adjustment period in the United States because

they were so supported by the agency." Another family told them that, thanks to the CSS staff, their medical needs were well-addressed and they were very comfortable in their new community.

Well done Refugee Resettlement staff for welcoming the stranger and bringing them Hope in the Good Life!



Our CSS Refugee Resettlement staff works AND plays hard!

4th Annual
**WALK
TO END
HUNGER**



Support our CSS Lincoln Food Market
The competition is afoot!

Lincoln parishes are hosting drives all summer to collect the most food. Donate food or money to help your parish win.

Walk with us!

Each lap walked will raise more funds for our food market.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4
5 PM - 8 PM | Pius X High School
To learn more, visit csshope.org/walk



The economics of eating healthy

Katie Patrick
Executive Director

Nebraska, like many states across the nation, deals with health disparities exacerbated by economic challenges. Statistics reveal that a significant portion of the population faces obstacles when it comes to accessing nutritious food. In many cases, families living at or near the poverty line find themselves in food deserts—areas devoid of accessible grocery stores offering fresh fruits and vegetables. This is especially true in rural communities across the Midwest and one of the main reasons why Catholic Social Services is committed to prioritizing the accessibility and distribution of fresh fruits and vegetables as often as possible.

The correlation between poverty and poor dietary choices is stark: affordability often dictates food choices, and processed, calorie-dense options frequently replace fresh, nutrient-rich alternatives. It should also be noted that poverty can result from inaccessibility to, or lack of knowledge about, which foods contribute to poor health outcomes.

Let's consider the contrasting grocery lists for a family of four. We have one grocery list which includes frozen chicken breasts, fresh green beans, a carton of blueberries, Greek yogurt, and a half gallon of milk. In contrast, we have a less nutritious alternative that includes frozen pizza, canned peas, two boxes of Cinnamon Toast Crunch on sale, and a half gallon of milk. Can you estimate the price difference?

The financial strain on low-income households is palpable; the healthier option represents a significant investment that many cannot afford without assistance. This

economic disparity underscores the importance of initiatives like CSS's community garden in Lincoln, our partnership with the Food Bank of Lincoln which delivers fresh produce to both Lincoln and Auburn, as well as our food recovery program in Hastings. Together these programs help bridge the gap between nutritious food and those in need.

Tailored to meet the specific dietary needs of its community, our community garden cultivates not only vegetables but also hope and community spirit. Staple crops like beets and eggplants flourish under the careful attention of dedicated staff, volunteers, and generous donors. These fresh offerings are integral to CSS's food market, where they quickly find homes with families eager for healthier choices. As CSS's community garden enters its second year, the success stories of families choosing healthier options, children learning about gardening and nutrition, and volunteers finding purpose in service are testaments to its significance. Moreover, partnerships with other nonprofits, local businesses, educational institutions, and governmental agencies continue to strengthen CSS's capacity to serve.

Having expanded our partnership with the Food Bank of Lincoln, we now receive fresh produce twice a month in Auburn where we maintain one of the only food pantries in the four county area. We know how important our work is here when someone will drive 45 miles for assistance. Likewise, our food recovery program in Hastings is the answer to so many households facing food insecurity across the area. As part of our partnership with the Food Bank for the Heartland, on a weekly basis we recover fresh produce from several local retailers. This produce is then distributed at our downtown Hastings location.

In conclusion, our food market and meal services programs at CSS are not just about growing and/or distributing vegetables; it's about sowing seeds of change. It's a reminder that through collective effort and compassion, we can transform communities and improve lives, as together, we cultivate hope, one harvest at a time.



Finding your “Calcutta” right where you are

Blake Brouillette

Guest Columnist and Managing Director, Christ In The City

“Where is your Calcutta?” This question takes on meaning when put into context in St. Teresa of Calcutta’s following quote. In response to so many people wanting to go to Calcutta, India to serve the poor with her, she said:

“Stay where you are. Find your own Calcutta. Find the sick, the suffering, and the lonely, right where you are — in your own homes and in your own families, in homes and in your workplaces and in your schools. You can find Calcutta all over the world if you have eyes to see. Everywhere, wherever you go, you find people who are unwanted, unloved, uncared for, just rejected by society — completely forgotten, completely left alone.”

- St. Teresa of Calcutta

Foreign missions, volunteering at CSS, or providing items for a materials drive are excellent ways of serving the poor. It can be easy to desire and participate in these, and after the experience is over, continue our lives and leave the mission work for the “missionaries.” These instances, however, are more extraordinary forms of our call to serve the poor. Mother Teresa challenged us to see how we can serve the poor daily and to do this practically, we need to dive into the reality of poverty in our lives.

Spiritual poverty, or the poverty of loneliness, impacts every single one of us, and almost daily. Whether it be a struggling family member, coworker, or friend, the deepest form of poverty in the United States is the poverty of loneliness. This form of poverty can only be addressed through authentic relationships – by showing up for people, by greeting someone warmly, by sitting down to listen. Your mission field is exactly where you are, and you are the only one who can fulfill it.

Addressing this poverty of loneliness and being a part of the solution doesn’t take a Herculean effort, or anything radically different on your part. It takes viewing the daily interactions in your life through a new lens. A missionary lens. Seeing the deeper realities in your friends and family - or whoever the Lord puts in your path today, and living out authentic relationships with your presence. This is something you can do whether you’re a parent with three children under five, a full-time employee, bedridden in a nursing home, or anything in between. These are the places you’ll find your Calcutta.



Visiting Christ In The City missionaries recently served lunch at our CSS Lincoln site

Our humble volunteer “warrior”

Angelica Bauer

Food Market Manager & Volunteer Coordinator

All of our volunteers at CSS here in Hastings are wonderful, but I would like to take this opportunity to recognize one in particular, Matthew Wahlmeier. Matt comes in multiple days each week at 7:30 AM to work with our Tom Schik. Matt assists him in various duties and is very diligent. With his brute strength and ability to succeed in any task thrown his way, one would imagine his appearance to be like a fierce warrior, but yet, Matt does it all with a smiling face. He is one of the most humble people I know.



Matt stops to say “hi” to me each morning and always asks me how I am doing. While Tom is out healing from knee surgery, I have had the pleasure of working with Matt more closely and my simple words cannot describe the blessing that he has been. Though I may never be able to fully share with him the impact he has had on my life, I hope that this article can do him a bit of justice.

Matt loves to share about his family and specifically about two of his brothers, Father Joseph Wahlmeier, who is currently in Rome and newly ordained, Deacon Isaac Wahlmeier, who serves us at Saint Teresa, Lincoln. I ask you to offer a prayer, rosary, your suffering or mass for my friend Matt today, in thanksgiving for all that he does in bringing Hope in the Good Life to CSS Hastings!

Providing a simple way to ensure your legacy of giving

Every August is recognized as Make-A-Will Month, reminding us of the importance of planning for the future, both for ourselves and for those we love. Far from being a morose exercise, creating a will is an empowering action, putting the power of tomorrow directly into your hands. This August, we invite you to harness that power while reflecting on the causes closest to your heart.

Why, you may ask, do you need a will? The answers are both simple and profound:

- A will provides clarity and support to your loved ones, detailing how your estate should be managed.
- It prevents confusion and complications during a challenging time.
- It provides you an opportunity to love your neighbors on a grand scale; to support the communities and causes that have shaped your life and reflect your values.

Consider including Catholic Social Services (CSS) of Southern Nebraska in your will. Your bequest would not simply be a donation, it would be a continuation of your legacy; your commitment to perform Works of Mercy in response to the call of God. In including CSS in your estate plan, you ensure Hope in the Good Life for generations to come.



Creating a will is simpler than you think. CSS has partnered with FreeWill at csshope.org/FreeWill to provide you with intuitive solutions, tailored to common needs, so you can navigate estate planning with ease, and **at no cost to you.**

Please prayerfully consider how you can steward your resources and support the mission of CSS by making us one of, or the beneficiary of your estate. We sincerely appreciate your thoughtful reflection on this matter.

Many of our supporters give stock, use Donor Advised funds, or make a Qualified Charitable Distribution from an IRA, all of which are more “tax-smart” than giving cash. No matter how you choose to give, your contribution makes a profound difference.

Thank you for your continued support and your prayerful consideration. If you would like to learn more about how your life can have a lasting impact beyond the years you walk this Earth, contact jsoukup@csshope.org or (402) 327-6235. Thanks for helping us bring Hope in the Good Life!

*-John Soukup
CSS Development Officer*



REGIONAL IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

HASTINGS REGION

Honored as **2023 NONPROFIT OF THE YEAR** by the Hastings Area Chamber of Commerce.

IMPERIAL REGION

Helped a family facing eviction after the father lost his eyesight and the son, working to support the household, had car trouble.

LINCOLN REGION

Welcomed **79** new arrivals through our Refugee Resettlement Services program- with many more expected this year.

AUBURN REGION

Facility updates included a new freezer, shelving, a double sink, and back-of-house organization to improve resource capacity, overall efficiency, and support sustainability.

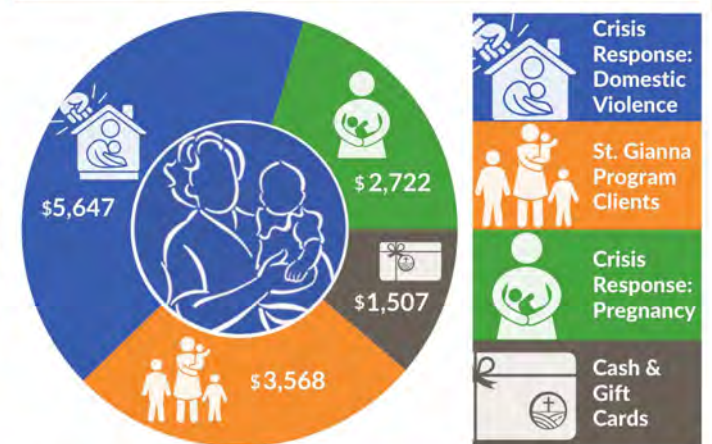
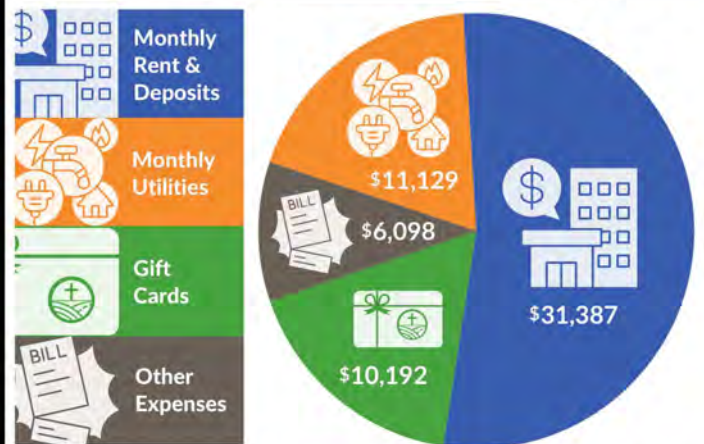
PROGRAM IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Total Monetary Assistance to our Clients: **\$58,805.01**

ST. GIANNA PROGRAM

Total Monetary Assistance to our Clients: **\$13,443.96**



FOOD MARKET & MEAL SERVICES

1,714 Food Market Shoppers <small>(CSS Lincoln, Auburn)</small>	79 Food Boxes <small>(CSS Hastings)</small>	9,603 Lunches & 1,473 Breakfasts Served <small>(CSS Lincoln, Auburn)</small>	59 tons (yes, TONS!) Food Recovered <small>(CSS Hastings)</small>	312 Baby Formula 163 Baby Clothing 459 Baby Diapers <small>(CSS Lincoln, Auburn, Hastings)</small>
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HOPE IN THE GOOD LIFE

csshope.org
Find all of our CSS social media channels at csshope.org/connect





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(S.A.G.)

The Patron Summer 2024

CSS Memorial Golf Classic tees up on Monday, August 5th

On Monday, August 5th, Hillcrest Country Club in Lincoln will host the 28th annual Catholic Social Services Memorial Golf Classic. This year's event will be held in memory of Bill Seiler. A long-time volunteer and friend of CSS, Bill passed away in February of 2023.

There are a number of ways to participate in this important fundraising event- even if you aren't a golfer:

Golfers. Includes cart, lunch and invitation to the cookout for golfers and a guest. **Team space is limited.**

Hole sponsor. This sponsorship allows your name, com-

pany name or parish organization to appear at a tee-box during the tournament.

Priest Sponsor. This underwrites the cost for a priest to play in the tournament.

Memorial Gift. A memorial gift may be made to Catholic Social Services in honor of a loved one.

Flag Prize. You may donate items, gift cards or services to be offered as flag prizes.



BILL SEILER

To sponsor, register or donate, visit csshope.org, scan this QR code or call 402-430-5626.



How can we pray for you?

Share your prayer intentions with us, and we will remember them during our Rosary offered in the Lincoln St. Joseph Chapel.

You can send your intentions by following the QR code, or by writing them on the enclosed remit envelope.

