



CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES OF SOUTHERN NEBRASKA

Hope in the Good Life

March 2023

The Holy Family/Shirley Lang

Helping to weather life's storms

Life's "storms" come in all shapes and sizes. Some stealthily sneak in when a once-safe home turns dangerous due to war or violence. Others arrive in a bill stamped "past due", or a pregnancy test's pink line. And some creep in like a fog, clouding the mind and creating a barrier from God's love and Divine purpose. Together, we are all called to help our neighbors weather their storms- to welcome the stranger, shelter the homeless, and counsel the doubtful. And as we do so, we follow the beautiful example of the Holy Family. They, too, faced storms and helped others weather challenges. For instance, we have St. Joseph as the protector: "...the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.' Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt"(Matt 2:13-14). With faith and trust, Joseph followed God's call and kept his family safe.

An even earlier example can be found

when Mary traveled to visit her kinswoman, Elizabeth: "During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth" (Luke 1:39-40). Elizabeth welcomed the pregnant teenager (while "she who was called barren" was blessedly expectant as well!) with open arms.



This brought comfort to both, confirmed God's plans, and deepened their bond and connection.

Shirley Lang has helped God's children weather their own storms, too.

It's not like Shirley and her late husband Jack had a lot of time on their hands. Raising five boys and a girl kept their plate rather full. But Shirley has a heart to serve. When the Roe v Wade decision was announced 50 years ago, Shirley knew she had to do something. She saw a notice in the newspaper about a meeting that was going to take place at Mary Costello's home for those who wanted to do something about the ruling. That meeting spurred Shirley to co-found Lincoln Right to Life. The very

(Continued on back page)



**In fiscal
year
2022,
CSS
distributed
306
tons of
food
across
24,000
square miles
of southern
Nebraska**

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PO Box 30425
Lincoln NE 68503-0425



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Helping to weather life's storms (continued)

next January she helped organize the first March for Life at the state capitol. Though hesitant at first, Shirley became a champion of the pro-life movement. "God puts people in front of you everyday," she says, "the littlest thing you say can make a difference."

Shirley has humbly made a difference over the years. Working with Catholic Social Services (CSS) and others in the pro-life movement, she would have young women who chose life stay with her during and after their pregnancies. Her love for His children extended to refugees fleeing violence. Years ago, CSS came across a teenaged boy who arrived from Cambodia and was living on the street. Shirley and her family opened their home to this young man, who stayed with the Langs for two or three years. A few years later, when the young man had moved to California and started a family, he called Shirley and said he and his wife just had a son and gave him the first name of "Lang".

On Saturday, March 11th, Shirley will be presented with the Heart of Christ award at Catholic Social Services' Celebration of Hope banquet. Thank you, Shirley, for bringing the "Heart of Christ" to so many of our neighbors over the years!

To listen to our latest Hope in the Good Life Podcast featuring Shirley Lang, visit csshope.org.



Social Gathering- 4:30 pm Dinner- 6:00 pm

**The Heart of Christ Award will be
presented to Shirley Lang**

We'll gather for an evening of food, fellowship, live Irish music, a panel conversation focusing on the Catholic response to the refugee crisis featuring members of the Ukrainian and Afghan community, and a program highlighting the work of CSS this past year. RSVP required for seating purposes- deadline is 3/6/23.

To purchase seats with a credit card, visit csshope.org/celebration2023 or just scan this QR code →

