



CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES OF SOUTHERN NEBRASKA

Hope in the Good Life

June 2025



Bill Sullivan, Imperial Thrift Store Manager, speaks with Francis Oleru and Aloysius Aleke

Devotion to the Sacred Heart | St. Isidore Gift & Thrift

Embracing the call to compassion

Rooted in compassion, devotion to the Sacred Heart calls us to embrace a love that forgives, heals, and serves others selflessly. The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus originated in the revelations received by St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. In June of 1675, she experienced visions of Christ's Sacred Heart, calling for love, reparation, and devotion. In 1856, Pope Pius IX designated the Friday following the feast of Corpus Christi as the feast of the Sacred Heart for the universal Church. Ever since, the month of June has been devoted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and his immense love for all of humanity.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart is rooted in compassion—a deep awareness of the suffering of others, joined with the desire to relieve it.

Recently, our St. Isidore Gift & Thrift Store in Imperial, and the Imperial community, wholeheartedly answered the call to embrace the needs of others with compassion.

Like all of our Gift & Thrift stores, St. Isidore Gift & Thrift provides affordable, low-cost items to those in our community who need it the most. Those who are starting over, rebuilding, or simply trying to make ends meet can find connection and friendship at the store.

Recently, our Imperial office had the unique opportunity to help two individuals get connected to the Church and community. Francis Oleru, a medical laboratory scientist from Nigeria, arrived in Imperial with his wife and four young children.

(Continued on back page)

DOUBLE YOUR SUPPORT!



In partnership with Smokin' on Broadway, this fundraiser for Imperial area nonprofits is made possible by the Imperial Community Foundation. They'll match a total of \$50,000, up to \$10,000 per organization like St. Isidore Gift & Thrift! Here's how to double your generosity:

GIVE VIA MAIL

St. Isidore Gift & Thrift
P.O. Box 1085
Imperial, NE 69033

List "Chase County Challenge" in the memo field. Donations will be accepted until June 28th.

GIVE ONLINE

Donate on the CSS website:
csshope.org/donate

Under "Specific Designation" select "Chase County Challenge"



IN PERSON AT THE 6/28 EVENT



Come by our booth at the fairgrounds in the grassy area outside the arena from 5 to 7 pm during Smokin' on Broadway on Saturday 6/28

All funds we raise go toward St. Isidore Gift & Thrift and Catholic Social Services.
Thanks for supporting **HOPE IN THE GOOD LIFE!**



PO Box 30425
Lincoln NE 68503-0425



#HopeintheGoodLife

Embracing the call to compassion (cont.)

Shortly after, their fifth child was born. He had accepted a job at Chase County Community Hospital but arrived with no furniture, no car, and nowhere to stay. What he did have was faith and a deep trust that the Church would be there for him. While still in Nigeria, Francis searched online for the local parish and found Father Gilde at St. Patrick's Church. He called and introduced himself, not knowing what would come of it but trusting that God would provide.

Bill Sullivan, CSS Imperial Thrift Store Manager, stepped in to help Francis and his family get the resources they needed. Through the store, they received car seats, kitchen items, furniture, and more. When Francis needed a vehicle but did not yet have a credit history, parishioner Dan Russell stepped in to guarantee a loan.

"There is a difference between wants and needs," Francis said. "The need came at the right time, and that is how you know God is really working."

A few months later, Aloysius Aleke, a fellow Catholic medical laboratory scientist from Nigeria, arrived in the United States hoping to reunite with his wife and



St. Isidore Gift & Thrift Store, Imperial

daughter who were already here. He reached out to Francis, who helped connect him to the hospital in Imperial to begin working. Aloysius received help and necessities from St. Isidore Gift & Thrift Store which helped him begin his new life. Wherever I go, I see the Catholic Church as my home," he shared. "I find peace there. Everything that happens in

one's life is always to the glory of God." **St. Isidore Gift & Thrift store offers not only tangible resources, but meaningful connections. Every time someone walks through the door, they are given a chance to encounter Hope in the Good Life.**



In our latest *Hope in the Good Life* podcast, CSS Development Officer John Soukup talks with **Francis Oleru and Aloysius Aleke**. Scan the QR code to listen now, or visit csshope.org/podcast

