



CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES OF SOUTHERN NEBRASKA

Hope in the Good Life

December 2022



The Flight into Egypt/John White

Strangers in a strange land

“Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt...

(Matthew 2:13-14)

Imagine being St. Joseph. You awaken Mary and tell her that you must take Jesus and leave your homeland immediately. After traveling over 400 miles, you arrive in a strange land meeting new people, having to find housing and adjusting to a new way of life.

John White welcomes the stranger to a strange land. A native of Virginia, John worked for 36 years as an engineer for Exxon/Mobile, retiring in 2014. Shortly after retiring, John began searching for volunteer opportunities.

He got in touch with Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC), an organization that provides men and women, most age 50 or better, opportunities to serve others.

In 2017, he began working with refugee services offered through the Diocese of Arlington, VA.

Eventually, John and his wife Kathy decided to move to Nebraska where one of their daughters is a professor at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. John got in touch with the IVC site in Omaha to inquire about volunteer opportunities. In the fall of 2021, he interviewed with Catholic Social Services in Lincoln. He met with Poe Dee, CSS Refugee Resettlement Director, and CSS Executive Director Katie Patrick about helping with cultural orientation for immigrants and

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Strangers in a strange land (continued)

refugees. He teaches employment preparation class, assists with file work, and has helped setup apartments for new arrivals. John has long felt a desire to help those strangers who are coming to a strange land.

“There’s lots of problems in the world today,” John says. “This is one way I can help. These are people in need that you can actually help.”

Helping these families and individuals feel welcome in a strange land is part of how John lives his faith. “Catholic social teaching is the bedrock of my faith in action,” he said. He is also impressed with how welcoming a community Lincoln is. People here are willing to “do what it takes” to make these families and individuals feel accepted. Thank you, John, for helping our new neighbors find hope in the good life!

Learn more about John by listening to our latest Hope in the Good Life Podcast episode at csshope.org/podcast.

Hope in the Good Life is the monthly newsletter of Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska. To receive our monthly publication, drop us a note in the enclosed envelope. To receive our updates electronically, visit csshope.org/connect.

CSS Programs

Striving to get them back on their feet

Every day across southern Nebraska we are approached by families and individuals in need of help- whether it is a need for a food pantry, help with medical bills or other assistance. At CSS, it is our goal to offer “wrap around services” to our neighbors.



As CSS Executive Director Katie Patrick explains, “What’s really neat about our services at CSS is, for example, when a family or individual comes through our doors we are able to provide them the food that they need, but we are also able to offer emergency services such as rent or utility assistance if they need it.” Patrick says that in the non-profit community, it is referred to as “wrap around” services. “It’s a holistic way of serving a family or individual,” she says. “A way to embrace them and provide what we can to get them back on their feet again.”

It’s our way of offering them hope in the good life.