Helping in extraordinary ways

“Home” is a word filled with meaning: Security. Warmth. Stability.

Many of those we serve at Catholic Charities have lost their homes—the cornerstone of their health, wellbeing, and stability. Some sleep on mats on a shelter floor, just inches apart. Others find transitional housing as they work toward a brighter future.

Thanks to your generosity and compassion, many find pathways back home every day. In this issue, you’ll read about Ruth, who now has a safe place where she can receive the care she needs as she struggles with dementia. You’ll read about Dave, who found community and companionship to help him persevere after receiving a devastating health diagnosis. And you’ll also read about the volunteer “Warehouse Ladies” who organize all the generous donations of household essentials, getting them ready to help those to serve build new homes.

Many of the people we see every day have had their dignity taken away from them. Your kindness and generosity help restore that dignity. You become their neighbors, providing an intangible sense of hospitality and companionship that many of our most vulnerable neighbors so desperately need. Simply put, you help them find home in so many extraordinary ways. Thank you for all you do.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES PROGRAM

Tours

Northside Child Development Center: Tuesday, April 21, 3:30 p.m.
Family Resource Center: Tuesday, June 3, 3:30 p.m.
Dorothy Day Center: Wednesday, July 16, 3:30 p.m.

Higher Ground: Thursday, August 13, 9:30 a.m.

TO RSVP
Call 612-204-8374 or email anthony.parrish@cctwincities.org.

One day last fall, 74-year-old Ruth hopped on a Jefferson Lines bus in South Dakota and knew one thing for sure. She needed to get home.

Ruth arrived in Minnesota with little money, few possessions and even fewer memories. Everything she owned was packed in a cardboard box, worn while suffering from dementia. Ruth knew this was home and it was where she wanted to be—where she needed to be.

Ruth stayed on the streets, slept on the floor at Catholic Charities’ Dorothy Day Center, then on a bunk in the second floor women’s program.

Case Manager Marilyn Cooper from Catholic Charities’ Older Adult Services has been instrumental in getting Ruth the help she needed, from connecting her with medical caregivers, other professional services and helping her find a permanent home. “Marilyn has helped me a lot,” Ruth said. “That means love and it means care.”

With your help, Ruth has a warm place to sleep each night. She’s taking the proper medication, and spends her time reading her Bible or looking at the photos of her family, their names written above each face.

She’s become a quiet woman with few words, but when she looks at her case manager a slight smile forms on her face and she utters three simple, yet powerful words. “I am thankful.”

READ MORE: cctwincities.org/Lulu

MARCH / APRIL 2015

Inside this issue:
• We’re celebrating National Volunteer Month in April.
• Band of Brothers at Dorothy Day Center
• Puppy Love at St. Joseph’s Home for Children

Even while suffering from dementia, Ruth knew this was home and it was where she wanted to be—where she needed to be.

Puppy love

Lulu is 72 pounds of puppy love in its purest form. Lulu, an Old English Sheepdog, spreads understanding, compassion and love wherever she goes. Lulu and her owner Heidi Hesse regularly visit libraries and hospitals. This fall, they started visiting kids at Catholic Charities’ St. Joseph’s Home for Children.

“Having a pet visit brings a sense of normalcy to a treatment setting, where they’re away from their families and everything they know,” therapist Dina Reminick said. “Of course, the biggest benefit of Lulu is the unconditional love and no judgment.”

The children agree and some even call Lulu their favorite therapist. “She likes us. She doesn’t care what mood we’re in or who we are, she’ll come and give us love,” said 13-year-old Alex. “I love dogs. Dogs are my favorite.”

The kids gather around Lulu and pet her, herb, shake her paw. “It’s like putting your hat on Lulu’s head. Elsa* was having a bad day today. Elsa speaks Lulu mostly with her face, tossing the kisses Lulu gives. Smiles and laughter are prevalent.”

With your help, Ruth has a warm place to sleep each night. She’s taking the proper medication, and spends her time reading her Bible or looking at the photos of her family, their names written above each face.

She’s become a quiet woman with few words, but when she looks at her case manager a slight smile forms on her face and she utters three simple, yet powerful words. “I am thankful.”

READ MORE: cctwincities.org/Lulu

“Marilyn has helped me a lot. That means love and it means care.” —Ruth, Older Adult Services
Faith and friendship
Volunteering forms bonds at overflow shelter

When a Catholic Charities’ client moves out of the shelter and into a home of their own, they receive a gift of a laundry basket filled with basic household necessities. It’s a treasure to individuals, as they pack up their belongings and move on in the parlor and some gather around.

The men eat dinner together. A TV is turned on in the parlor and some gather around.

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When the doors open, and people come in from the cold, they’re welcomed with friendship. People like Marty, who is a Dorothy Day Center regular is talks of often getting on a bus and moving back with his family and starting work again. People like Dale, who is slow to take off his coat and hat, letting his body thaw from the cold before he starts removing layers.

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We need you to keep the warehouse full

Catholic Charities’ In Kind Warehouse provides shoes to those experiencing homelessness, home goods for people moving out of shelters, and clothing and basic products such as hygiene items to those we serve.

It exists because of the generosity of donors. It works because of the work of our amazing volunteers. It is always in need of donations as well as volunteers to organize those goods.

“Im good at keeping volunteers busy,” said Gretchen Olmscheid, warehouse and procurement specialist. “I could use more volunteers on a daily basis!”

The warehouse could not exist without your help. While the list is ever growing, this time of year the warehouse could especially use donations of cleaning supplies and mops, dishes sets, silverware, cookware, mattress pads, air mattresses, underwear, sports bras, basketball shorts and footwear. All clothing must be new. We do not accept used items.

The warehouse wish list is regularly updated and available online.

READ MORE: cctwincities.org/WishList

Volunteers create behind-the-scenes magic

The baskets are just one of the many things assembled by a group of good-hearted women who have collectively given 57 years of service to those most in need.

Known as the “Warehouse Ladies,” Ruth, JoAnn, Molly, Judy and Nancy come to Catholic Charities’ In Kind Warehouse on Tuesdays. They organize. They sort. They clean. In short, they take the generous gifts given by donors and get them ready for those in need.

“We’re good friends. We work hard. We work fast,” Ruth said. “Even though we have good times together, we’re committed to getting a lot done.”

Molly, who spent her working years as a social worker with Hennepin County, said volunteering with Catholic Charities is a positive way to continue to help others in her retirement. “It gives people a sense of accomplishment. In retirement, you’re still needed. That’s life. You keep going as long as you can,” she said.

GET INVOLVED: cctwincities.org/Volunteer

Volunteering forms bonds at overflow shelter

Each Minnesota winter, a brotherhood forms in the city of Saint Paul. The overflow shelter at Catholic Charities’ St. Paul Office provides about 40 extra places for men to sleep when Catholic Charities’ Dorothy Day Center is at its capacity. On the last two weeks of each winter month.

It’s made possible thanks to a group of men from metro parishes. Each night, two men come in and transform the daytime office into a home. Volunteers sleep at the overflow along with those who are experiencing homelessness.

When the doors open, and people come in from the cold, they’re welcomed with friendship. People like Marty, who is a Dorothy Day Center regular. He always talks of soon getting on a bus and moving back home after his family and starting work again. People like Dale, who is slow to take off hi coat and hat, letting his body thaw from the cold before he starts removing layers.

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Faith and friendship

On a January day in 2014, Dave entered the shelter at Catholic Charities’ Higher Ground. The 47-year-old was slow to take off his coat and hat, letting his body thaw from the cold before he started removing layers.

He stayed in the shelter at Higher Ground just two days before moving to the second floor for the night. He spent his days looking for work and running program at Higher Ground.

Dave’s résumé was not going unnoticed; he kept getting close to a job. So close, frustratingly close. People like Marty— who had played by the rules—was stranded up a sleeper in a shelter.

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“The physical exam led to a heartbreaking diagnosis: Huntington’s Disease. The diagnosis may have changed how Dave’s life will end, but we are not surprised that Dave plans to live— with purpose, with heart and with meaning. “I feel awesome. I am very lucky and I know that. Whatever comes from this disease I’m going to fight and live it on my own terms. I’m going to have a good attitude no matter what,” Dave said.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS! VISIT CCTWINCITIES.ORG/DONATE

Thank you, UCare, for making such a difference in the lives of those we serve
Catholic Charities Calendar of Events

CONCERT FOR THE COMMON GOOD

BENEFITS CATHOLIC CHARITIES AND EXHONOR NICE AT ST. OLAF CHURCH

SAINT OLAF CHURCH
DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1PM

The St. Olaf Parish Choir joins From Age to Age Choral Music Ensemble, with solo and orchestral forces of St. Olaf to perform. Music by Francis Portalis, Joseph Haydn, Giuseppe Donizetti, and Timothy Lumbovang will perform solo and duet vocal works. From Age to Age Choral Music Ensemble, with solo and orchestral forces of St. Olaf Parish Choir, will perform as choir-in-residence. Dr. Lynn Trapp will be at the Lively-Fulcher organ.

Lunneborg will perform solo and duet vocal works. From Age to Age Choral Music Ensemble performs as choir-in-residence. Dr. Lynn Trapp will be at the Lively-Fulcher organ.

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