

FRIEND,

It's always astonishing to see another calendar year draw to a close. With the considerable transitions each of our lives have seen in 2021, it's even more surprising. Time simply means something different now, as does health, and community.

It is in the spirit of finding time to celebrate as a community that we offer our gift



of Comfort & Joy again this year. In this issue, you'll find out what it means to our neighbors when they receive a Christmas gift from you. You'll see some of what we have in store for December and how you can be part of that spirit. And you'll hear more about our exciting collaboration at the Cherry Hill Town Center – a gift we hope will be renewed each day for our neighbors in that community.

This issue of Blessings comes full of wishes, including my wish for you: that your Thanksgiving is blessed and your Christmas season is joyful!

Bill

William J. McCarthy, Jr.,
Executive Director



WINTER 2021

BLESSINGS

CATHOLIC
CHARITIES

CHERISHING THE DIVINE WITHIN ALL

Inspired by the Gospel mandates to LOVE, SERVE and TEACH, Catholic Charities provides care and services to IMPROVE the LIVES of Marylanders in need.

Homelessness & Poverty
H



Holiday giving evokes childhood memories and quiet gratitude

Christmas presents remind Albert Moy of his childhood in Washington, D.C.

"Things were good," he said. "I had a good family. Spending time with them, lots of presents, good food, family visiting from out of town."

These are the memories that came flooding back to the 71-year-old the first time he received a holiday gift at the Weinberg Housing and Resource Center. The present wasn't fancy – some clothes,

a watch, a few markers – but Moy said it reminded him of his parents.

Moy came to Baltimore three years ago, divorced and experiencing homelessness. Looking for a place to stay, he found a bed at the Catholic Charities-run center, first in an overflow facility, then in the men's dorm, and more recently in a local hotel when COVID-19 forced the shelter to find new spaces for residents.

With his relatives now spread across the country, more likely to text and email than visit, Moy said the festivities have been a welcome distraction.

"They're basically reviving the Christmas spirit, helping people get through the holidays and enjoy them," he explained.

NOBODY EVER HAS TO GIVE ANYTHING

George, another Weinberg resident who prefers not to use his real name, explains his gratitude differently.

"Nobody ever has to give anything at all," he said. Describing the boots, clothing and other supplies he has received at the holiday events, he added: "I appreciate the things that I've been given."

George first moved into the Weinberg facility in 2017.

"I know what it's like to have something and lose it," he said, remembering when he had a home and a steady job. "Now, I appreciate every time somebody gives anything. I try to give stuff away too, even though I don't have that much to give away in the first place."

He recently received a housing voucher, and – while he is holding his excitement in check for now – he recognizes how dramatically stable housing could change his circumstances. He said he hopes to soon be in a place where he, too, can give more to others.

For more, visit comfortandjoy2021.org

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A daily gift of music, cookies, crafts and more!



Bring the joy of Christmas to others with **Gift Tag Tuesday**

benefiting our neighbors at

- Weinberg Housing and Resource Center
- St. Vincent's Villa
- Catholic Charities Head Start and Early Head Start
- My Sister's Place Women's Center

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Changing the narrative in Cherry Hill

NEIGHBORS WHO GREW UP IN SOUTH BALTIMORE feel the change at the Cherry Hill Town Center.

“Many positive forces are coming together for Cherry Hill – opportunities that have never existed before,” said Michael Middleton, executive director of the Cherry Hill Development Corporation, who has been working in the neighborhood since 1978.

After a year and a half of work, the first two phases of the town center renovation are complete. This includes improving the building’s façade, welcoming the neighborhood’s first bank and leasing 95% of the 4,400 square feet of retail space.

Spearheaded by Catholic Charities, the project is the result of an in-depth collaborative effort with the Cherry Hill community.

“This project gives me a great sense of pride and hope,” said William J. McCarthy, Jr., executive director of Catholic Charities. “The town center relates to everything else that’s going on in the community, so it’s really about quality of life. It’s an example of what we call ‘greater promise.’”

Catholic Charities first purchased the town center in 1997. The organization brought in tenants that could provide vital community services, including a barber shop, a laundromat, a



Photo credit: 195 BUSINESS/Maximillian Franz Photography

local branch of Baltimore’s Enoch Pratt Free Library, and a WIC office run by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health to provide supplemental nutrition assistance to women, infants, and children.

Those efforts and the renovations that followed align with Catholic Charities’ commitment to providing holistic systems of support so that individuals, families, and communities can realize their full potential.

Now, with the first two phases of the town center completed, Catholic Charities plans to pause to see how the community uses the space before embarking on further renovations. McCarthy said a few things planned pre-COVID, including a community kitchen, may no longer make sense.

Housing remains a pressing local issue – many neighborhood residents live in subsidized rental units that have been poorly maintained – so Catholic Charities is providing office space in the town center to Cherry Hill Strong an initiative of Purpose Built Communities, a nonprofit known for its holistic approach to breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty. This work will add the efforts of key community partners, such as the Youth Resiliency Institute and the Black Yield Institute, which provides residents with locally grown low-cost fresh produce.

Each step is part of Catholic Charities’ mission, said McCarthy, who believes there is often too much focus on challenges and deficits instead of opportunities.

“The Cherry Hill Town Center represents a change in the narrative. It restores hope by showing what’s possible,” he explained.



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The Value of Unrestricted Funding

MAKING A GIFT TO THE LEADERSHIP BREAKFAST – OR OTHER FOCUSED APPEAL – PROVIDES INVALUABLE UNRESTRICTED SUPPORT TO CATHOLIC CHARITIES.

This type of funding is the lifeblood of the organization as we serve growing numbers of community members facing grave challenges.

We are determined never to be in a position to turn away someone who is struggling – and that takes resources.

Having the flexibility to use money where it is needed most allows Catholic Charities to respond with speed and agility to serve our fellow Marylanders as the pandemic and related recovery efforts continue.

Thank you for your support, which allows us to move quickly in times of great need.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

CHERISHING THE DIVINE WITHIN ALL

Catholic Charities is the largest multi-service charitable organization in Maryland. Serving all, we provide innovative programming to accompany people on life’s journey including assistance to those living in poverty, individuals with developmental disabilities, immigrants, older adults, families and children in crisis.

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