Here’s to those who gave to Catholic Charities Maine in 2017 —

to those who shared their resources to keep our programs and services operating, and to those who gave of themselves, with their time, their treasures, and their talents.

We cannot fulfill our mission without you — your capacity to care, to respond with compassion, and give of yourselves unconditionally. Thanks to your support, working through our communities and parishes, we can continue to serve the poor, protect the vulnerable, and welcome the stranger.

In this annual report we celebrate the impact of your good works, and spotlight some of the creative, thoughtful ways our volunteers and donors were able to give:

— a parish refitting bicycles for newly-arrived refugees to give them freedom and independence
— a therapist donating dolls to give seniors companionship and love
— a volunteer sharing a love of reading to give kids a brighter start in life
— corporate sponsors improving their communities with gifts of money and volunteers

We recognize with gratitude the many donors who have invested in Catholic Charities Maine. Your generosity inspires us.

“"When we give cheerfully and receive gratefully, everyone is blessed.”

— Maya Angelou

Our Mission:
To empower and strengthen individuals and families of all faiths, by providing innovative, community-based social services throughout Maine.
A great idea GIVES neighbors a lift

At All Saints Parish, a group of seven Roman Catholic churches in midcoast Maine, they have a motto “We believe and we share.” So when Catholic Charities put out the word that it was seeking donations of gently used bicycles for our Refugee and Immigration Services (RIS) program, All Saints promptly answered the bell.

“It was awesome,” says Hannah DeAngelis, program director of RIS. “Our contact, Amie Besier, called and said, ‘We have 34 bikes on our lawn!’”

The idea for the bike drive came to VISTA volunteer Dana Dotson after working a few months at RIS. “We’re always struggling with the problem of transportation for our clients,” says Hannah. “There are a lot of needs people have when they come here, and self-sufficiency is the most immediate. I think a bike is a really smart part of that … helping people to be able to move around the city on their own terms.”

With the help of Portland Gear Hub, a local non-profit, the bikes are being refitted and presented to grateful clients. In addition to the bicycles, Catholic Charities provides helmets, locks, and lights, as well as a safety program focusing on state bicycle laws and rules for sharing the road with cars, and Dana has even biked with some clients to work to make sure they arrive safely.

Helping put refugees on the road to self-sufficiency is a big challenge — but with problem solvers like Dana and the sharing hearts of parishes like All Saints, there are no obstacles we cannot overcome.
A GIFT brings new life to lonely hearts

When psychiatrist Ames Curtis first created her Dear Aunt Polly dolls, back in 1985, she had no idea the gift they would one day prove to be for lonely seniors. Her donation of more than 900 dolls to Catholic Charities’ Independent Support Services (ISS) and SEARCH programs have helped change the lives of elderly Mainers living alone and in nursing home and healthcare facilities around Maine.

“It’s beautiful to see,” says Judy Peace, assistant supervisor of ISS. “These elderly folks, they have somebody to love again. The dolls remind them of their grandparents or their peers. They began to reminisce and tell stories.” Our homemakers and volunteers have seen the folks in their care move from confusion and isolation and begin to regain their socialization skills and interest in living. For men, finding themselves alone for the first time in decades after their wives have passed away, the dolls give them “someone to talk to and sit with during meals.”

“I was hoping they would go to a lot of people who are aging … who are lonely,” says Curtis, “because I think they really can become like companions.” With the gift of her dolls, she has given lonely seniors a whole new lease on life.

Have a special gift or collection you’d like to donate? Most of our programs have “Wish Lists” — your gift could be the answer to someone’s prayers!
A retired teacher GIVES her time to share a love of reading

They say “once a teacher, always a teacher.” That’s certainly true for Wendy Warnecke, who left the suburban elementary schools of New York City for retirement in Maine eight years ago, but couldn’t leave behind her love of teaching.

“Literacy opens up the world to us,” she says, with enthusiasm. “It is critical to our development and gives us choices as we grow into adulthood. My goal each week is to pique the children’s curiosity about books and have them enjoy the hands-on activities during circle time. The activities I bring reinforce small motor skills, beginning reading, writing and number skills, and encourage creativity.”

Volunteering at St. Louis Child Development Center in Biddeford has turned out to be, in her own words, “a perfect fit.” After five years, she still loves coming in, “even during the summer months. I continue to enjoy finding new books and planning appropriate activities … I thank the St. Louis Community for allowing me to be a part of the life of the children in the Rainbow room!”

Proof that those who give, receive the best rewards of all.

Corporate GIVING provides healthy returns

“Well, we don’t take on or let go of anything easily,” says Aroostook Savings & Loan President John Swanberg when asked about the company’s 15 years and counting commitment to the Feed the County initiative with our Food Banks in Aroostook County.

From the early days of food and thrift store donation collections all across town and cereal box drives at the branches to today’s robust fundraising events, parade appearances and educational public service campaigns with fellow Feed the County corporate partner WAGM-TV, Aroostook Savings & Loan believes helping friends and neighbors isn’t just good for business. It’s for the greater good of the community.

“Well’ve been in the trenches with Catholic Charities and see how food insecurity is affecting so many good, hardworking people, so as long as there is a need we’re committed to doing something about it,” says Vicki Keaton, Vice President.

The Catholic Charities Food Banks supply 24 pantries all across Aroostook County and also grow healthy vegetables on donated land through its Farm for ME program. In 2017 more than 23,000 individuals were served by the program.

“We’ve built such great relationships in the community and it’s a wonderful feeling to see someone who’s been helped in the past come back and now be able to donate or volunteer. We’re just thankful to be a part of it all,” adds Keaton.

And we’re thankful to all the businesses that recognize how investing in Maine’s most vulnerable populations helps build stronger, better communities for us all.

Ready to share your passion with a person in need? Volunteer!
In 2017, Catholic Charities Maine relied on thousands of giving hearts helping thousands of Mainers in need.

Our 613 volunteers contributed to help those in despair, companionship to those in darkness, and help to those who might get nothing help at all.

Our 1,038 donors gave more than $397,546* so that we might continue to provide 20+ programs and services to more than 50,000 Mainers in need.

3,351 seniors received companionship and a helping hand at the Catholic Charities Senior Services and SEARCH.

327 children received safe, loving education at St. Elizabeth’s and St. Louis Child Development Centers.

Our Behavioral Health Network provided treatment to 1,574 adults battling mental illness and behavioral disorders through community integration, behavioral health home and assertive community treatment services; including more than 200 adults battling mental health issues and behavioral disorders through community integration, behavioral health.

Our 1,308 donors gave more than $937,546* so that we might continue to provide 20+ programs and services to more than 50,000 Mainers in need.

710 volunteers contributed more than 45,500 hours at a value of over $895,000 to help further our mission.

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*Does not include United Way, federal and state grants, or Diocesan funding.

Funding for Outreach to the Homeless through our PATH program or co-occurring disorders found hope and help through Counseling Services and St. Francis Recovery Center.

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Counseling Services and St. Francis Recovery Center

Children were welcomed by our Parish Social Ministry.

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GIVING CIRCLES
Ambassadors’ Club ($10,000+)
Anonymous
Richard and Carolyn Daigle
Roberta and Sheryl Mabry
Doug and Shyan Nowell
Sandy and Mark Smith
Troy and Mar bulk
Christopher and Nancy Phipps
1966 Society ($5,000 - $9,999)
Anonymous
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Susan Mosher
Louise Stoddard
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365 DAYS OF GIVING HELP & HOPE
CATHOLIC CHARITIES MAINE ANNUAL REPORT 2017