What is Parish Social Ministry?

Parish Social Ministry (PSM) works to strengthen parish communities through a mutually supportive relationship to bring the love of God to suffering neighbors of all faiths. We form relationships with parishes to assess the needs in their communities and the resources and programs available to them. We are resource specialists for parishes and help them to explore their own social ministry initiatives, and to develop or evaluate their current social ministries. Parishes know best what is needed, and what works in their own communities. Thus we work together to fulfill our baptismal call to serve our neighbors in need.

“We seek to build evangelizing communities of faith, justice, and solidarity, where all believers are challenged to bring God’s love, justice, and peace to a world in desperate need of the seasoning of the gospel and the light of Catholic teaching.”

—Introduction to USCCB Communities of Salt and Light: Reflections on the Social Mission of the Parish

Our Mission

Parish Social Ministry is a resource specialist in the development and delivery of services that strengthen the capacity of parish communities to serve vulnerable people of all faiths. We provide leadership, guidance and training for parishes in their social ministries. We minister to people directly. We do this with mutual respect, Christ-centered compassion, insight and adaptability to meet the varied needs of those we serve.

Parish Social Ministry

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Living the Gospel we proclaim and growing in love with God and neighbor
Services We Provide:

Matthew 25 Award
This award is given to a parish directly serving vulnerable people in need, regardless of their faith affiliation. The award is up to $15,000 to the parish for operational costs needed to support, expand, or develop its social ministry to continually serve more people. It can be used to help purchase items needed for the ministry. Examples include a dishwasher for a soup kitchen, computer, and purchasing building space.

The Mustard Seed Project
We collaborate with parish groups and Catholic schools to facilitate service projects, such as fundraisers or clothing drives, to support the agency in its mission. We can provide representatives to educate your group on our services and programs; provide tool kits for implementation and offer ongoing support throughout your Mustard Seed Project efforts.

Relief & Hope Services
Through this service, Catholic Charities provides limited financial relief for seriously vulnerable persons with a proven need; suggesting hopeful possibilities when other resources are not enough. Every situation is different, and we assess each request individually.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) Parish Grant
This domestic, anti-poverty, social justice program is sponsored by the U.S. Catholic Bishops. It helps fund parishes working to increase self-reliance, self-sufficiency and self determination skills in people who want to move out of poverty; and educates parishes on matters of social justice.

A Dozen Ways We Can Help You:
• Fostering social ministries
• Applying for the Matthew 25 Award
• Connecting faith and ministry through Catholic social teaching
• Engaging youth and young adults in a Mustard Seed project
• Training staff and volunteers
• Creating relationships between your parish and local Catholic Charities programs
• Convening parishes through regional trainings
• Providing weatherization support to those in need
• Applying for a Catholic Campaign for Human Development Parish Grant
• Conducting parish surveys
• Creating a Social Justice and Peace Commission
• Providing E-News communications to provide spiritual & ministry-based resources

“As often as you did it for the least of my brothers or sisters, you did it for me.”
— Matthew 25:40

With our long tradition of providing caring, professional services to the vulnerable and hurting members of our community, Catholic Charities is a true resource to parishes who wish to provide ministry opportunities to deepen faith and strengthen their church community.

Recognizing that the needs of people in our state are greater than we, or a parish alone, can handle, Catholic Charities strives to work together to complement parish efforts. We are natural partners with parishes in serving people through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching and applying its principles to analyze ministries and advocate for social justice. We seek to empower parishes by helping facilitate participation of the parish community through leadership, guidance and training. By serving those in need together, we can all be transformed more into the image and likeness of God.