

CELEBRATING PARISH SUCCESSES

St. John Vianney Parish Helps Community Members Weather the Rising Costs of Keeping Warm

In 2010, St. John Vianney Parish's Social Justice and Peace Commission decided to begin addressing weatherization problems in Aroostook County with long-term solutions, rather than just continuing to purchase fuel oil for needy residents. In 2010 and 2011, the Commission sponsored and subsidized three window insert workshops for parish area residents.

In 2012, they wanted to go beyond the window inserts and help low-income homeowners make permanent weatherization improvements to their homes. With financial assistance obtained through a financial partner with Catholic Charities Maine's Parish Social Ministry program, the parish sexton and another employee contacted homeowners, inspected their homes and installed as many cost-saving energy improvements as the budget per home allowed. Installations included door weather-stripping, door bottoms, silicone caulking, fiberglass insulation, spray foam insulation, foam board and other similar items, depending on the needs of each individual home.

Clients were delighted by how much warmer their house feels and they are very grateful for the parish's efforts.

St. John Vianney is now exploring ways to expand the program to include health and safety installations such as smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

By helping homeowners lower their heating costs, more of their income can be allocated to other necessities. "Nobody enjoys asking for a "hand out", but being offered a "hand up" gives them a sense of empowerment and self-sufficiency," says Social Justice and Peace Commission Chair Laura Audibert. "And burning less fuel also means a cleaner environment for everyone!" she adds.

If you are interested in implementing such a program, contact Parish Social Ministry at **1-800-781-8550**.



CONTACT US

For more information,
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A DOZEN WAYS

we can work
together to
strengthen
your parish!

Looking for ways to engage, educate and inspire your parishioners and help your community-at-large? Catholic Charities Maine's Parish Social Ministry has teamed up with a multitude of Maine parishes on programs and initiatives that make a difference in their local communities. Here are just a dozen ideas of ways we can work together and be a resource to your parish. Give us a call and together we can fulfill our baptismal call to service!



 Catholic Charities
Parish Social
Ministry

1 FOSTERING SOCIAL MINISTRIES

From parish interest assessments to planning and implementation, we can help make your social ministries what you want them to be.

2 APPLYING FOR THE MATTHEW 25 AWARD



Each year we recognize and financially support one parish's outstanding efforts in directly serving vulnerable people

in need, regardless of their faith affiliation. Don't miss out on this chance for a \$5,000 gift to support, expand, or develop your parish's social ministry! Deadline is April 26, 2013. Prior winners include St. Martin's Pantry at Christ the Divine Mercy parish in Millinocket and St. Anne's Church in Dexter for "Our Lady's Kitchen" where they serve a loving community dinner on Sundays to anyone who comes.

3 CONNECTING FAITH AND MINISTRY

We can provide training on Catholic Social Teaching to ground your ministries in Christ and His calling us to serve. The foundational principles of dignity of life, solidarity and subsidiarity will illuminate what we believe, why we believe and inspire your parish to act in response to Christ's love for us.

4 FINDING THE RIGHT VOLUNTEERS

Put our years of expertise and training to work in helping you identify, cultivate and maintain a healthy base of volunteers to carry out your parish's social ministries.



5 TRAINING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Ensure your staff and volunteers are well-prepared in best practices for social ministries with our trainings on such topics as confidentiality, healthy boundaries and dealing with challenging people.

6 CREATING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN YOUR PARISH & LOCAL CATHOLIC CHARITIES PROGRAMS

With Catholic Charities' more than 30 social service programs statewide, we can connect parishioners and the community-at-large with a variety of resources for seniors, adults and children.



7 EXPLORING A ONE-TIME MATTHEW 25 PROJECT GRANT

Did you know every cluster is encouraged to apply for a one-time grant to start an initiative to serve disadvantaged people in your community? From food banks and soup kitchens, to clothing banks and fuel assistance, parishes have taken advantage of our grants to meet the specific needs of their community.

8 PROVIDE WEATHERIZATION SUPPORT TO THOSE IN NEED

We can provide volunteer training and identify funding sources to help parishes implement weatherization programs that can lower heating costs for vulnerable members of the community.

9 GABRIEL PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

We can help provide the tools and expertise you need to develop the "Gabriel Project" in your parish. This parish support system helps pregnant women and new parents in the community access the assistance and resources they need.

10 PARISH SURVEY

Sometimes the first step in creating new parish initiatives is to survey the congregation to determine what needs exist and where interests pique. We've helped numerous parishes craft and administer surveys to parish constituents so you have the information necessary to make informed decisions.

11 CREATING A SOCIAL JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

Social Justice and Peace Commissions provide the structure and volunteers needed to implement many ministries. We can provide advice, templates and guidance to establish this helpful and transformative group of parishioners.



12 E-NEWS

Bi-monthly newsletter providing spiritual and ministry-based resources from across the state and country.

CELEBRATING PARISH SUCCESSES

St. Michael Parish Proves that Many Hands Make Light Work

Hands for Humanity is a group established by St. Michael Parish to make a difference in the Augusta community. The first year it was able to serve 150 families at Christmas, the next year it grew to meet another need by creating 100 backpacks with school supplies for children in the community.

"After receiving a Matthew 25 grant from Catholic Charities Maine Parish Social Ministry program we have been able to serve more than 200 families at Christmas, 200 children with back packs and school supplies plus this year every child got a new pair of shoes and socks," notes Jerri Whitman, Hands for Humanity member.

Hands for Humanity also serves the elderly population in the Augusta community by providing prayer shawls, blankets and personal care items during the Christmas season. The group also tackled weatherization this winter with a program which helped 11 families.

"We have been able to serve three times as many families with the help of Catholic Charities Parish Social Ministry, notes Whitman, "for this we are very thankful and grateful for their help and support."

If you are interested in implementing initiatives like Hands for Humanity, call Parish Social Ministry at **1-800-781-8550**.

