



— ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI —
**CATHOLIC SOCIAL
ACTION OFFICE**



LOVE IN ACTION

A Principle of Beacons of Light

NOVEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

Thankful for God's Love

Greetings from the Social Action Office. We hope all is well and you're enjoying the beautiful fall weather.

The election season is FINALLY over; now the hard work begins. Whether you're excited or worried about the results, we must come together and work to ensure the dignity of all people is honored, we take special care of those on the margins, we protect the Earth and all that God beautifully and intentionally created, and we stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers around the world.

We will now enter what is called the lame duck period of the legislative year. There are many bills that could be addressed in the next two months both

on the state and national levels, and we must remain diligent and committed to standing up for what is right and against what is wrong.

We ask God to give us the strength and resolve to engage in the work of peace, justice, and solidarity.

This month we celebrate Black Catholic History Month. Here are some [great resources](#) from the Catholic University of America to check out, and you can learn more about the [six African-American candidates for sainthood](#) at the National Black Catholic Congress website. And don't forget about the events coming on Nov. 22-23 - national symposium on the 40th anniversary of "What We Have Seen and Heard" - and Nov. 24 - mass celebrating the life of Fr. Clarence Rivers with Cardinal Wilton Gregory joining us from Washington D. C.

The annual **Catholic Campaign for Human Development** (CCHD) collection occurs this month in correspondence with the [World Day for the Poor](#). You can find more information below. Don't forget to support this wonderful ministry where our Church stands with and empowers those in poverty.

Finally, our annual Fair Trade Sale happens on Sat. 11/16 at the Curran Center at UD. All the exciting details are below.

We humbly ask that you continue to pray for us. This continues to be an exciting and challenging year, and your prayers - and engagement! - will make our success possible. God help us!

If there's anything that we can do to support the work happening in your community, please let us know. We're trying to be more present to families of parishes, especially during the Beacons of Light process, and we'd love to (re)connect with you and work to build up God's kingdom of peace, justice, and kinship in your corner of the kingdom.

We will continue to send out Regional Updates with time-sensitive reminders and Action Alerts encouraging everyone to bring their voice and

power to bear on important issues.

We wish you a wonderful month and joyful Thanksgiving, and - as always - we look forward to seeing you soon as we continue to stand up for justice, solidarity, and equity.

Peace and all good,

Tammie, Sr. Christine, Jill, Glen, & Andrew



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- ETHICALLY SOURCED -
COFFEE | TEA | CHOCOLATE
CLOTHES | JEWELRY
HOME GOODS | GIFTS
ENTERTAINMENT

University of Dayton Curran Place
1700 S Patterson Blvd, Dayton, OH 45409

SATURDAY
NOVEMBER

16

9:00 AM
2:00 PM

Fair Trade ARTISAN SALE



SEE YOU THERE!

For more information, contact Jillian Foster
jfoster@catholicaoc.org



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI
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University of
Dayton





CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

For the eighth year, the **Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD)** collection coincides with the ***World Day of the Poor***. Last year, thanks to the generosity of our Archdiocese, \$77,250.00 collected in our Archdiocese funded ten (10) local organizations. Through CCHD, parishioners' dollars make lasting change for the poor and vulnerable in our own communities.

CCHD appeal weekend is **Saturday, November 9th and Sunday, November 10th.**

The collection weekend is **Saturday, November 16th and Sunday, November 17th.**



What We Have Seen and Heard - 40th Anniversary of the Pastoral Letter Fr. Clarence Rivers - 20th Anniversary of his Death

In the fall of 2024, two important anniversaries will highlight the great contributions of African American Catholics in the Church. We join the African American Pastoral Office in three events honoring these anniversaries.

On Friday & Saturday, November 22 & 23, an academic symposium titled, Seeking for a City, will be held at Curran Place on the campus of the University of Dayton with session.

On Sunday, November 24 - The Feast of Christ the King - Cardinal Wilton Gregory will celebrate mass at the Cathedral-Basilica of St. Peter in Chains at 11:00am to honor the 20th anniversary of Fr. Clarence Rivers passing.

For more information, check out the [website](#). For questions, contact [Deacon Royce Winters](#).



Stories from the Heart: *Voices of Refugees and Immigrants*



Catholic Charities of Southwestern Ohio has started the Voices Project to tell the stories of refugees and immigrants who have settled in our community. Here are a few examples of what participants have said after meeting our new neighbors and listening to their actual stories:

- “I was riveted to every word. He opened my eyes to the humanity of refugees and immigrants.”
- “Very touching, so informative.”
- “Healing for the storyteller; understanding and connection for the listener. He was so captivating.”
- “A personal experience makes the story much more impactful. His story was so personal, not abstract information. It was a privilege to be here to hear it.”

If you want to get beyond the media spin and shrill politics, this interactive presentation is for you and your congregation or organization. If you want to really understand the ordeal refugees and immigrants go through and appreciate the character of the people who are coming to us, scheduling this 90-minute experience will be life-changing and inspirational for participants. To learn more or schedule a meeting, please contact Paul Bergman at paulbergman@live.com.

“I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” – Matthew 25:35



A Vision for Love in Action: Becoming Communities of Salt & Light

Is your family of parishes ready to take your visioning for Love in Action to the next level? The Department of Life, Dignity, & Charity is offering a 3-part series **Love in Action** opportunity to help your parish family Love in Action team understand why this vision is important, how this vision has developed in the history of the Church, what are the larger and small local organizations with which your parish can cooperate, and how to build on what you already have going on in your parishes (along with your resources of time, talent, and treasure) to create a growing vision of Love in Action in your parish family. This series is only offered on the deanery level so we invite you to ask your pastor if he is interested in bringing this series to your deanery and how he might work with the other pastors and families in his deanery to bring it to fruition. If you would like more information about the series, please contact Mary Anne Bressler at mbressler@ccswoh.org.



Embracing God's Creation

A series of presentations, immersions, and prayer experiences
focused on the ecological spirituality of Laudato Si'



Environmental Justice 101

Join Groundwork Ohio
River Valley Executive
Director, Sarah Kent, for a
presentation in Kennedy
Auditorium, CLC, Xavier
University



Scan this QR
code to RSVP!

12
November **7 PM**
Kennedy Aud.



Join the Cincinnati Jesuit Works on **Tuesday, November 12, 7 pm** for Environmental Justice 101 in Kennedy Auditorium of the Conaton Learning Commons at Xavier

University. Sarah Kent, Executive Director of Groundwork Ohio River Valley, will present on the state of environmental justice issues in our city and the work of organizations like Groundwork to address these issues in a community-centered way! [RSVP here today!](#)



Advocacy Opportunities

The Catholic Conference of Ohio recently shared updates on several pieces of legislation being considered in Columbus. Please consider reaching out to your elected officials and letting them know your support or opposition to these bills.

CCO Opposes HB 451 on Remittance Transfer Fee

The Catholic Conference of Ohio opposed [House Bill 451](#) in the House Ways and Means Committee. HB 451 would levy a remittance transfer fee on money transmissions to a person outside the United States. Within the testimony, CCO notes that “HB 451 puts onerous restrictions on legal residents of Ohio and threatens their support of loved ones stuck in cycles of poverty and violence. ...these small remittances of \$200 to \$300 are the difference between survival and starvation.” Ohio residents should not need to pay an additional fee for fulfilling a Christian obligation to provide charitable resources to people in other countries. [Click here to view the full testimony >](#)

HB 7, the Strong Foundations Act, Passes the House

[House Bill 7](#), the Strong Foundations Act (*sponsored by State Representatives Andrea White (R-Kettering) and Latyna Humphrey (D-Columbus)*), a CCO-supported bill, passed the Ohio House of Representatives and will now go to the Ohio Senate. HB 7 supports Ohio mothers and babies in their first one thousand days to address maternal and infant mortality and to improve health, developmental, and learning outcomes

SB 198 Passes the Senate

CCO supported [Senate Bill 198](#) (*sponsored by Senators George Lang (R-West Chester) and Nathan Manning (R-North Ridgeville)*), which provides inmates with state identification cards and documentation upon their release relating to work experience, education, and trade skills passed out of the Small Business and Economic Opportunity Senate Committee. It will now move to the Ohio House.

End the Death Penalty in Ohio

The time is NOW to change state law.

Make your voice heard and urge your state legislators to support [Senate Bill 101](#) and [House Bill 259](#) to abolish the death penalty in Ohio. We cannot solve violence with more violence or obtain justice via the state of Ohio directly and intentionally killing a defenseless human life.

[Action Alert for Senate Bill 101](#)

[Action Alert for House Bill 259](#)

Help Communities Affected by Climate Change

Urge Congress to support the Green Climate Fund and Development Assistance.

[Urge Congress](#) to address the impact of climate change by providing robust funding for poverty-reducing international assistance programs in the fiscal year 2024 budget, especially for the Green Climate Fund and Development Assistance.

Help the Hungry

Urge lawmakers to protect SNAP in the Farm Bill.

[Urge Congress](#) to protect families. This version of the bill would undermine a recent change to the Thrifty Food Plan, a USDA-developed estimate of how much it actually costs to feed a family on a budget. It's projected this policy would cut future SNAP benefits for all recipients, totaling roughly \$30 billion dollars over ten years.

Urge the Senate to Strengthen the Child Tax Credit

Every year, the Child Tax Credit (CTC) lifts millions of American families out of poverty and helps them live according to their dignity and with greater economic security. While the USCCB has long supported the CTC, the current credit must be improved because it excludes many of the poorest children. [Add your voice here.](#)

Stand in Solidarity with our Afghan Neighbors

Tens of thousands of Afghan nationals have now been resettled in communities across the United States, many of whom served alongside U.S. servicemembers. They are in need of a legal pathway to real and lasting safety. [Add your voice here.](#)

Urge Congress to Safeguard Children in Need and Ensure Communities Have Access to Religious Workers

The bill would relieve the backlog currently confronting special immigrant juveniles by exempting them from the annual caps for the employment-based, fourth preference (EB-4) visa. This would ensure that abused, neglected, or abandoned youth who are deemed eligible for relief by state courts no longer need to compete with adults relying on the same category of visas. It would also increase the availability of EB-4 visas for religious workers who serve communities across the nation. [Add your voice here.](#)



From the Respect Life Office

Bob Wurzelbacher, Director of Respect Life Ministries

The Beauty of Open Adoption

I recently interviewed Terri Marcroft, founder of ***Unplanned Good***, a non-profit organization that promotes “adoption as a viable, reasonable option for those dealing with unplanned pregnancies.” She is an adoptive mother herself, and her journey led her to research and uncover some startling statistics about adoption in this country. In her book, ***Pro-Choice, Pro-Adoption***, she points out that there are approximately 2.8 million unintended pregnancies in the United States each year. The vast majority of those women appear to believe there are only two options available to them: abortion or raising the child herself. Less than 1% of those women choose adoption. In the meantime, there are nearly 2 million families waiting to adopt an infant. There are many more couples waiting to adopt infants than there are babies available for adoption. Why is there such a disparity between the number of unintended pregnancies and the number of adoptions?

There are, of course, several reasons. The first one is the push of abortion. Abortion numbers peaked at about 1.6 million in 1990 and had been going down for years until 2017 when it dipped below 900,000. Since then, abortions have risen again in the United States, and in **2023 Guttmacher estimates** those numbers are back again to over 1 million, despite the overturn of Roe v. Wade. Still, even among those children who are not aborted, adoption is rarely chosen, despite being such a beautiful option. While of course adoption is not going to be the best choice for everyone, a quick look of how children adopted by a married couple compare statistically to those raised by a single mom in measurable outcomes such as education levels, poverty and mental health suggests that it ought to be given greater consideration.

A few decades ago, most adoptions were closed. In a closed adoption, the birth mother does not know who adopts her child and has no contact with the adoptive family. She lives the rest of her life never knowing what happened to her child. Beginning in the 1990s, that changed, and today the vast majority (95%) of adoptions today are open. With an open adoption, there is contact between the birthmother and the adoptive family. That contact could be as little as periodic letters, or it could be as much as regular in-person visits, and everything in between. In her book, Terri points out the studies that demonstrate that openness in adoption benefits everyone involved: the birthmother, the child and even the adoptive family. Adoption looks quite different and is much more positive than most people think it is, even for the birthmother. If mothers in crisis pregnancies better understood that, and could have their fears alleviated, perhaps the dire numbers associated with the lack of adoptions would improve.

I invite you to check out my latest interview with Terri Marcroft on my **[Being Pro Life podcast](#)**. You can listen to the podcast on your favorite audio player on your phone, or go directly **[to this link](#)**, or watch the **[video version here](#)**. Look into the stories she makes available on her website **[Unplanned Good](#)**, and become a positive advocate for the beauty of adoption.



From the Office for Persons with Disabilities

Lisa Averion, Associate Director of Office for Persons with Disabilities

Mental Wellness Ministry Updates

In the spring I met with our newly formed Mental Wellness pilot teams, and I asked them why the Lord was calling them into this mission. We talked about our “why” and what was truly propelling each person to be part of something so important for the Catholic Church. Some of the team members responded that they were there because they had mental illness, cared for loved ones with mental illness, knew how important it was to break the stigma of mental illness, had loved ones die by suicide, or worked in the professional field and wanted to evangelize to all. Mental Illness does not discriminate by class, race, religion, etc. Mental Illness has been the unspoken illness for so many due to the stigma that comes with a diagnosis of an anxiety disorder, mood disorder, eating disorder, bi-polar disorder, and schizophrenia, to name a few. When someone is diagnosed with diabetes, cancer, or arthritis, families and friends show support by their care, concern, and prayers for healing. Mental Illness has been misunderstood for so many years. According to a study by **[Clement et al. \(2015\)](#)**, stigma was associated with an increased likelihood of delaying or avoiding seeking help for mental health concerns [8]. Consequently, symptoms may worsen over time, escalating the condition’s severity and making treatment and prospective

recovery more challenging. As a Mental Health First Aider, I find myself constantly reminding others that recovery is possible, but we must break the stigma so our brothers and sisters can find hope and healing through our words and actions. Mental Wellness Ministry is an outreach ministry that follows the steps of Missionary Discipleship to walk with persons experiencing mental health challenges and to create a faith community free from the stigma that is often associated with mental illness. I encourage everyone to advocate, serve, and accompany all members of our community and create a culture of BELONGING for all.

Lisa Averion, laverion@catholicaoc.org



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