

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

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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



Annually we distribute grants to parishes to help start new ministries or expand the capacity of their current

ministry so that they can assist more people in their communities. For example these grants could help with acquiring more space for a thrift store to be able to provide more clothes; purchasing freezers so that your food pantry can serve more meat products; or helping buy a vehicle so that you can transport people to medical appointments.

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 ENGAGING YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IN A MUSTARD SEED PROJECT



We provide a Catholic service opportunity for faith formation groups and schools to support a Catholic Charities program. We help connect faith to service through Catholic Social Teaching and educate the groups on the good works the Church is doing to help our brothers and sisters in need.

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 25 social service programs statewide, we can connect parishioners and the community-at-large with a variety of resources for seniors, adults and children.

7 CONVENING PARISHES THROUGH REGIONAL TRAININGS

We provide several opportunities annually – across the state – for parish staff and volunteers to come together for formation and sharing of best practices with their direct service ministries.

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 APPLYING FOR A CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PARISH GRANT

We distribute grants annually to parish ministries that make transformational changes for those they serve living on the margins of society and/or to help parishes educate and engage parishioners in these important ministries to help the faithful concretely live out their baptismal call to serve one another.

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**.

