Parish Social Concerns Efforts

In the Diocese of La Crosse

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable: "A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first." United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions



Diocese of La Crosse

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Parish Social Concerns Efforts

In the Diocese of La Crosse

Background

Beginning in 2013, the Diocese of La Crosse, Office for Ministries and Social Concerns began a survey of the parishes and their efforts in Social Concerns and Respect Life. This survey does not provide a complete picture of social justice and charitable activity among the parishes in the diocese. Rather, it aims to provide some perspective into the vast amount of love in action at least from the responding parishes and to offer ideas to parishes seeking to broaden their parish social ministry efforts.

Of the 162 parishes in the Diocese of La Crosse, 50 parishes responded to the survey. The fruit of this survey is a directory of projects our parishes have adopted to help meet the needs of their local communities.

The directory is broken into:

- Diocesan Wide Efforts
- Projects common throughout the diocese
- Project within each deanery

There are also many ecumenical efforts throughout our diocese in which our parishes collaborate with people of other faith traditions. This directory is not intended to be all-encompassing directory of all initiatives in each deanery, but an overview of our parish efforts.

This directory is an evolving project requiring input from the local parishes. Please contact the Office for Ministries and Social Concerns for additions and corrections to this directory.

"Each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society."

Pope Francis,

The Joy of the

Gospel, no. 187

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Diocesan Wide Efforts

40 Days for Life

http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/ministries/40 days for life.htm

40 Days for Life is a focused pro-life national campaign with a vision to access God's power through prayer, fasting, and peaceful vigil to end abortion. The mission of the campaign is to bring together the body of Christ in a spirit of unity during a focused 40 day campaign of prayer, fasting, and peaceful activism, with the purpose of repentance, to seek God's favor to turn hearts and minds from a culture of death to a culture of life, thus bringing an end to abortion through prayer, fasting, community vigils and outreach.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/ministries/organizations-0.htm

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is the domestic anti-poverty program of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, working to carry out the mission of Jesus Christ "... to bring good news to the poor ... release to captives ... sight to the blind, and let the oppressed go free." (Luke 4:18) A portion of the funds collected stays in the Diocese of La Crosse to fund local initiatives. Past recipients include warming shelters, aid for housing, and restorative justice program for crime victims and offenders.

Catholic Relief Services

http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/ministries/organizations-3.htm

Catholic Relief Services is the official international humanitarian agency of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. CRS examines the issues that are dramatically impacting the safety and well-being of poor and vulnerable people worldwide. The work is based on the principles of Catholic social teaching, primary among them the protection of the dignity of the human person. A portion of the funds raised in the Lenten Rice Bowl collection is used for Project Seed in the Diocese of La Crosse.

Project Milk

Office for Ministries and Social Concerns Lorraine Riedl

Iriedl@diolc.org

ph.: 608-791-2665

www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/ministries/project-milk.htm

A program of the Diocese of La Crosse where milk is purchased from local dairy farmers, processed at Grassland Dairy into powdered milk. It is then shipped to Casa Hogar Juan Pablo II in Lurín, Peru where it is given to the orphanage to use and distribute as needed in and around Lurìn, Peru.

Project Seed

Office for Ministries and Social Concerns Lorraine Riedl

<u>Iriedl@diolc.org</u> ph.: 608-791-2665

www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/ministries/Project-Seed.htm

The portion of funds raised in the Catholic Relief Services Lenten Rice Bowl collection that remains in the diocese funds Project Seed. Every spring, there are sales to provide area farmers with low-cost, high-quality seed. There is alfalfa, and clover ready for sale and non-GMO seed can be ordered. Comparable yields make this seed an attractive alternative. The Diocese of La Crosse also offers financial assistance to those in need, so no one is turned away. Donations to help support Project Seed are welcome and can be sent to the Diocese of La Crosse.

Catholic Charities

3710 East Ave. S La Crosse, WI 54601 Ph 608-782-0710 Fax 608-782-0702 Toll Free 1-888-212-HELP (1-888-212-4357) info@cclse.org

www.cclse.org/

Many parishes support Catholic Charities of the Diocese of La Crosse by hosting collections for school supplies, winter coats, socks, donations to help with utility bills, and more. Our parishes also support Catholic Charities by donating their time at various shelters and programs.

Casa Hogar Juan Pablo II

Office for Missions
Ph:. (608) 791-2676
Email: mapel@diolc.org

http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/missions/index.htm

www.homeajpm.org

Casa Hogar Juan Pablo II, a mission of the Diocese of La Crosse, Wisconsin, first opened its doors to homeless children in 1985, but was officially founded the following March of 1986 by Servant of God, Fr. Joe Walijewski. Currently, 64 children call Casa Hogar their home, where they are given faith, family, and a chance at the promising future they deserve. Using the Family Program based on the famous Boys Town® methods, Casa Hogar Juan Pablo II has become a leader in the treatment and care of orphaned, abandoned, and abused children of Peru. Over the years, our parishes have donated first aid supplies, clothing, eye glasses (partnered with Lions clubs), and most recently, guitars and bicycles! Project Milk is an important initiative that helps both Wisconsin farmers and Casa Hogar by purchasing Wisconsin milk, processing, and sending powdered milk to the children in Peru.

Jail/Prison Ministry

Office for Ministries and Social Concerns

Lorraine Riedl

Email: lriedl@diolc.org
ph.: 608-791-2665

Several people in the Diocese help our local jails and prisons by leading bible studies and conducting worship services. If you are interested in becoming involved in this important ministry, contact Lorraine at the Diocese of La Crosse Office of Ministries and Social Concerns. For general information on jail and prison ministry see the website of the American Catholic Correctional Chaplains Association (catholiccorrectionalchaplains.org).

Service Mission Trips

Office for Missions Ph:. (608) 791-2676 Email: mapel@diolc.org

http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/missions/index.htm

We have many parishes who take trips to different areas in an effort to provide aid. Trips have been to Uganda, Haiti, Ukraine, Appalachia, tornado and flood stricken areas, and many more. Many parishes also have youth participate in the Mission America Trips sponsored by the Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry, www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/yya.

Fortnight for Freedom

www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/freedom

Religious Liberty is our first, most cherished freedom. It is the God-given freedom of individuals and communities to manifest their religious beliefs in teaching, practice and worship. Unfortunately, in our nation and around the world, we are seeing increasing violations of this freedom. The two weeks from June 21 to July 4 is a time of concerted prayer, education, and action in defense of religious liberty in our diocese and across the United States.

March for Life

Office for Youth and Young Adult

Chris Rogers

Ph.: (608) 791-2659 Email: crogers@diolc.org

The March for Life is an annual trip to Washington D.C. to participate in the National March for Life on or about January 22, the anniversary of Supreme Court decision Roe v. Wade legalizing abortion. Contact the Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry for more information, www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/yya.

Projects Common throughout the Diocese

Mother's Day Rose and Father's Day Carnation Sales

Roses are sold at the parish on Mother's Day and carnations on Father's Day. The proceeds for these sales go to the local pregnancy care centers or Respect Life groups.

Food Pantries

Our local food pantries are blessed to have so many generous parishes donate non-perishable food and personal care items. Contact your local food pantry for information.

Giving Trees and Gift Baskets

Most often held during Advent and Christmas; parishioners around the diocese donate gifts to families in need, elderly, shut-ins, and nursing homes. These acts of giving to others spread the love of Christ.

Hospital/Nursing Home/Homebound Ministry

This valuable ministry is more than delivering communion to those who are unable to attend Mass, it is caring for one another, connecting them to parish life and providing a sense of community. Many parishes also give Christmas gifts, prayer shawls or other items to those unable to attend Mass with their parish.

Baby Showers, Diaper Drives or Baby Bottle Collections

Many parishes hold baby showers and collect baby items to donate to area pregnancy care shelters. Leaving no wet behinds, diapers are collected for area shelters or are donated to local shelters and food pantries. Other parishes hand out empty baby bottles to parishioners asking them to fill them with loose change and donations are given to various pregnancy care centers or pro-life organizations.

Community Meals

Many of our communities host a community meal to anyone who would like to participate. These meals are provided at no cost and rely on volunteers.

Spiritual Adoption

www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/ministries/Spiritual adoption.htm

While anyone can pray for the unborn at any time, a spiritual adoption program is a parish, religious education program or school wide program where participant pledge to pray for nine months for a baby in danger of abortion. Many will begin at the Annunciation on March 25 and run until the Nativity of Our Lord on December 25. Other programs will run the 9 months of a school year. Others will use whatever timing works best for their parish.

Projects by Deanery

Arcadia Deanery

OLPH Mission

411 South Washington Street Arcadia, WI

Tel: 608-323-7116 www.holyfam.com

The mission thrift store at Our Lady of Perpetual Help provides clothing and small household items for those in Arcadia and the surrounding areas. It is staffed by volunteers who believe that giving of their time and talent carries out the commission of Christ, "whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." (MT 25:40)

Chippewa Falls Deanery

Bloomer Clothes Closet

1005 9th Av Bloomer WI 54724 715-568-1129

www.clothescloset.bloomertel.net

Bloomer Clothes Closet is a not for profit organization run by volunteers. Clothing is donated by members of the community then given away for free or for a free-will donation. They stock children's, men's and women's clothing and shoes. They also accept bigger baby items such as high chairs and strollers.

Durand Deanery

Winter Haven Homeless Shelter

1602 Stout Rd.

Menomonie, WI 54751

Winter Haven is temporary emergency shelter for homeless in Menomonie, WI. St. Joseph parish has used a portion of the parish hall for this shelter for 3 years and now have expanded and moved next door to their main building. Winter Haven is a program of Stepping Stones of Dunn County, and is co-sponsored by St. Joe's. Winter Haven provides a safe, warm place for adults age 18 and over to stay overnight. Dedicated volunteers are needed – between 50 to 60. If there are no volunteers to take a shift the shelter will be closed. Donate personal care items, cleaning supplies, coffee, breakfast coupons, gas cards and bus tokens or, make a financial

donation to: Winter Haven, Stepping Stones of Dunn County, 1602 Stout Road, Menomonie, WI 54751. Make checks out to Stepping Stones of Dunn County.

Eau Claire Deanery

Beacon House

309 E. Lake Street Eau Claire, WI 54701 715-834-4357

Email: ecihn@sbcglobal.net

Operated by Eau Claire Interfaith Hospitality Network, Inc., Beacon House serves families and pregnant women who are temporarily homeless or at risk of homelessness by providing resources for emergency assistance, stabilization, and prevention. Each day of the year, volunteers provide meals and personal attention to those using the shelter.

Sojourner House

618 South Barstow Street Eau Claire, WI 54701 (715) 514-5556

Email sojournerhouseeauclaire@gmail.com

www.cclse.org

Since opening in November 2011, Sojourner House has averaged more than 1,000 sheltered stays per month to the homeless of the Chippewa Valley. Guests represent a cross-section of the community, including adult men and women ranging from 18 to 77 years old, high school to college graduates and all ethnic groups. Overnight stays by guests range from a single night up to 90 nights. The average age of guests is 41. Operated by Catholic Charities, the shelter relies heavily on donations from individuals, local businesses and churches of all denominations. Without their support, the shelter would not have become a reality and would be hard-pressed to meet the needs of the homeless in the community.

Apple Pregnancy Care Center

2600 Stein Blvd. Eau Claire, WI 54701 715-834-7734

www.applepcc.org

Apple Pregnancy Care Center is a non-profit organization funded by donations, and provides services absolutely free of charge. All of the services - from pregnancy testing and counseling to practical assistance - are provided with complete confidentiality. Many participated in their Life Walk fundraiser!

Lend a Heart - Lend a Hand

Parishes identify people in the area who could use a hand with the fall and spring yard work. The work is accomplished in one long day with the aid of youth groups, scout groups, local community clubs and anyone willing to lend a hand.

La Crosse Deanery

Front Door Ministry

While most parishes have a Charitable Works fund, Cathedral Parish has an organized aid program to network with different agencies and provide maximum aid. A more complete explanation is found on our <u>website</u>.

Warming Shelter

Catholic Charities of La Crosse 413 South 3rd Street La Crosse, WI 608-782-0710 x220

http://www.cclse.org/laxwinterwarmingcenter.php

The La Crosse Warming Center's Mission is to work with the greater La Crosse community to better serve those experiencing homelessness with dignity and respect by providing a safe and warm place for 15 homeless adults, 18 years and older to get in out of the cold during the winter months. Our doors are open November 1 through March 31. We are moving to a new location on 3rd Street. The Center's hours are from 9 pm - 7 am, Monday-Sunday. The center offers open intake from 9 pm -10 pm. After 10pm the police, hospital or Salvation Army can refer clients. The Center does allow those individuals who are currently suffering from mental health and/or addictions to enter the facility as long as they are acting in a calm and respectful manor. To keep the doors open, hundreds of volunteers from area churches and the community are needed to staff the center. To volunteer or for more information, call Mary Fitzpatrick at Catholic Charities, 608.782.0710 x 220. Also see their website for a wish list and contributions toward the renovations of their new facility are greatly appreciated!

Place of Grace

919 Hood Street La Crosse, WI 54601 Ph.: (608) 782-6224 Place of Grace offers hospitality three days a week and one Sunday a month. During each day the community gathers to share in a meal and builds relationships. Volunteers help prepare and serve meals, clean-up, play with children, talk with guests, and most importantly, provide general hospitality to those who visit Place of Grace.

Marshfield Deanery

Frederic Ozanam Transitional Shelter

505 East Depot Street Marshfield, WI 54449 Director: Brittany Boyer

Ph.: 715-384-6555

www.stvincentsmarshfield.org

In March of 2014, St. Vincent de Paul Society of Marshfield opened a transitional housing shelter to provide housing for families who are in need of a safe place to stay and guidance to a better way of life. They strive to provide a temporary transitional home environment, transportation, food, job skill training, clothing and assistance in goal setting for permanent housing and medical attention for people in need.

St Vincent de Paul Society Thrift Store

169 N Central Ave. Marshfield, WI 54449

Store Manager: Dcn. Jeff Austin at 715-387-4425

Email: svdpmfld@frontier.com www.stvincentsmarshfield.org

The St. Vincent de Paul Society Thrift Store is one of the largest and well stocked stores in Wisconsin with three floors for your shopping. They have a large selection of clothing, housewares, domestic items and furniture. They can always us volunteers as well as donations.

Prairie du Chien Deanery

We need your help!

We know great things are happening in this area, but we haven't heard about them yet!

Richland Center Deanery

Door of Hope Pregnancy Care Center

217 N. Main St.

Viroqua, WI 54665

608-637-8688

Door of Hope is a crisis pregnancy center (CPC) to serve residents of Vernon, Crawford, and Monroe counties. They care for women, couples and parents in crisis pregnancies, giving them knowledge and support to enable them to choose life for their babies.

Lydia's House

265 N. Church St

Richland Center, WI 53581

Ph.: (608) 475-9479

Lydia's House provides emergency overnight shelter for people in desperate need. They also have A Child's Place, which is a 90 day homeless shelter for persons with minor children; and A Family's Place which provides up to two years of transitional housing for a family in need. Area parishes have volunteered their time at Lydia's House.

Stevens Point Deanery

Family Crisis Center

Ph.: 715-343-7125

Many area parishioners support the Family Crisis Center which offers a safe place to stay for victims of domestic violence and their children. Staff assists domestic violence victims and their children in identifying alternatives to the problems they are experiencing. Families are also provided with assistance in completion of temporary restraining order petitions, obtaining child care, transportation, housing, etc. They also offer low-cost rental housing for families in need when they leave the Crisis Center.

No Child's Wet Behind

St. Bronislava, Plover

No child's wet behind is a diaper collection for the local pantry helping keep the area children dry and healthy.

Place of Peace

1948 Church Street

La Crosse, WI 54481

Ph.: (715) 496-0164

Email: placeofpeacesp@gmail.com

The Place of Peace is an area ministry based on the Catholic Worker Movement started by Dorothy Day. Each week, people of all walks of life gather together at our facility to share a common meal, prayers, conversation and their lives. Our cooks come from all over Stevens Point

and Central Wisconsin and the menu varies widely. The Place of Peace also functions as a food pantry to those who show up on Thursday evenings and are in need of groceries.

St Vincent de Paul Society Thrift Store

2700 Post Road Plover, WI 54467 Ph.: (715) 344-7395

www.svdpplover.com

The St. Vincent de Paul Community Center of Portage County has been serving the Plover, Stevens Point and surrounding communities since 1988. Their Thrift Store provides a large selection quality goods for the whole family at affordable prices. The Emergency Food Assistance Program assists many eligible individuals sustain their food resources every month.

Thorp Deanery

Gifts of Love

Pattie Pflugradt, Coordinator E-mail: maskipaski@solarus.net

Ph.: 715-207-8348

Gifts of Love is a group of ladies from Sacred Heart Parish in Marshfield, Marshfield Deanery Counsel Of Catholic Women, La Crosse Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, and Immanuel Lutheran Woman's Guild. These ladies are dedicated to making NICU blankets, kimonos, incubator covers, hats, booties, sweaters, and many other needed items. Premature babies are often so tiny; they need extra tiny cloths or items to keep them warm. Our ladies do just that. They sew, crochet or knit items for them. Gifts of Love ladies make burial outfits and blankets for the little angels that are too tiny to live. For the mothers who miscarry or whose infants join God in heaven, they make memorial boxes. Grieving parents need special care too! And if a family needs a burial casket for a baby born to soon or is too sick to be with us, Gifts of Love make and donate a casket. This is all at no cost. If you or someone you know are in need of these items, please email (above) and they will get these items to you.

Change of Seasons Project

Spring and fall yard work is arranged and accomplished for elderly and disabled people in the neighborhoods in conjunction with the Clark County Office on Aging and the Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers, and anyone willing to lend a hand.

Hunger Banquet

Hunger Banquet Instructions

In an effort to raise awareness on hunger in the world and to raise funds, Our Lady of Peace parish held a Hunger Banquet in which, based on current world demographics, 10% of the guests received a full dinner at a nice table, 30% received a small meal at card tables and the remaining 60% sat on the floor and dined on rice and beans while enjoying the guest speaker.

Tomah Deanery

Helping Hands Board

St. Mary Immaculate Conception Parish started a Helping Hands board. The bulletin board, located in the back of church, is divided into "I Need a Hand" and "I can Lend a Hand." The Social Concerns committee aids in connecting people with a need, with people that are willing to help out.

Diaper Collection

The school children of St. Mary Immaculate Conception School research the cost of diapers and the health risks of keeping soiled diapers on the children. They then collect diapers for the local food pantry. Every year they come up with a unique name such as "Give Cheeks a Chance," and "No Child's Wet Behind." Over the past years, they have collected thousands of diapers keeping the Tomah area's babies dry.

Our Lady of Guadalupe School, Uganda

St Mary Immaculate Conception, Tomah, and St Mary, Neillsville, have partnered with area Rotary clubs to construct water wells and aided the school in Uganda. These groups have also donated chickens to the school. The school then uses the eggs as a source of protein for the children as well as a source of income for the school.

St Vincent de Paul Society Thrift Store

620 McEvoy Street

Mauston, WI 53948

Ph.: 608-847-6235

The St. Vincent de Paul Society Thrift Store is clean and well stocked conveniently located just off Interstate I-90/94. They have a large selection of clothing, housewares, domestic items and furniture. They can always us volunteers as well as donations.

Wausau Deanery

St Vincent de Paul Society of Wausau

131 West Thomas Street Wausau, WI 54401

Phone: 715-298-3028

Email: dhoppa@svdpwausau.org

www.svdpwausau.org/

Members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (or "Vincentians") are men and women who strive to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to individuals in need. We are young and old. Our members come in every shade of skin color. Some of us are wealthy, some are financially poor, but all of us are blessed with an awareness that our blessings (time, talent or treasure) are to be shared with our brothers and sisters in need.

Wausau Community Warming Center

540 South 3rd Ave.
PO Box 2186
Wausau, WI. 54402-2186
715-849-3311
http://www.cclse.org/wausauwarmingcenter.php

Catholic Charities operates the center and works with other community organizations to ensure success. The Community Warming Center is an action step of the Wausau Housing and Homelessness Coalition, to collaboratively raise community awareness to end homelessness by maximizing and strengthening existing resources, developing new, relevant solutions and creating a seamless delivery of services to end homelessness in Marathon County. The shelter provides a clean, warm and safe environment for up to 25 adult men and women, accepts and encourages guests' ambitions or hopes, provides a nightly hot meal to our guests, and ensures each guest's personal dignity, safety and respect.

Open Door Ministry

Ph.: (715) 848-4044

The Open Door Ministry was begun in 2010 as a hand up to recently released prisoners.

Marathon County Jail releases its prisoners before breakfast on their date of release, wearing

the clothes they wore when they went in. Open Door Ministry meets them with a cup of coffee, a bite to eat, a chance to choose some new clothing, and a word of encouragement and hope.

Circle of Love

Church of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ 621 2nd Street, Wausau, WI 54403 (715) 845-6715

info@eastsideparishes.org

http://eastsideparishes.org/east/

The Resurrection Parish, Wausau, sponsors soup lunches during lent. Many parishioners have helped to ease the loneliness of our shut-ins by making and delivering homemade bread and soup to Resurrection shut-ins the third Wednesday of each month. During Lent, the Circle expands this service to EVERY Wednesday and in addition offers a quick and delicious lunch from 11:30 to after 12:10 Mass (1:00). Those who are needy are invited at no cost – and those who can afford to pay are asked for a free-will donation. We carry on the work of the Circle of Love throughout the year on the profits of the "Lenten Soup Kitchen", including soup to Salvation Army, Benedictine Bingo, etc.

Wisconsin Rapids Deanery

Hope's Door

Hope's Door is a non-profit organization that provides household items and infant items to low income and poverty stricken families as well as disaster relief for help during a time of crisis.

We Need Your Help!

Additions and Corrections

This directory is an evolving project requiring input from the local parishes. We realize there are initiatives going on in the diocese not listed here or have changed. Please contact the Office for Ministries and Social Concerns for additions and corrections to this directory.