There's a real problem in our community and the problem is getting worse – largely because many of us haven't paid much attention to it. The problem, after all, is not part of our personal vision for the future. But it's there; and it's called hunger.

Here at Catholic Charities, we see many people in our community who are afflicted by hunger – young and old, educated and uneducated, employed and unemployed. Poverty does not discriminate and some of the greatest impact falls on our children. Do you remember Timmy? He is the 5 year old who didn't eat because it “wasn't his turn.” How can we not pay attention to that?

Today, over 16 million children in the United States do not have access to daily meals. Right here in west central Indiana that number has been estimated to be as high as 13,500 children who are food insecure. But that lack of food doesn't just last for a day – it will be there tomorrow and the day after, and again the day after that. The hunger continues until someone pays attention and decides to do something about it.

We have a vision at Catholic Charities to reduce and even eliminate hunger in our communities in our lifetime. It's a bold vision; one that clearly will require a lot of work and we need your help. As we work together to make this vision a reality, we must reach out to others, as well; inviting our neighbors, friends, and family to join us.

We cannot eliminate hunger unless we have many more community members paying attention and responding. We cannot alleviate this kind of suffering if we see the struggle, but then withhold the blessings God has provided, using them solely for our own purposes. Allow me to challenge you to share your gifts with others in the spirit of what Jesus taught us – only then can we see them used for His purposes.

As a father of five children, I want to make sure no child goes to bed hungry because they lack access to food. Ultimately, the task of feeding people is quite simple. It simply requires that we pay attention, get involved, and do something to help. Let's acknowledge that our role as people of faith is not simply to see this vision – but to become the vision.

John C. Etling
Agency Director
Bethany House Emergency Shelter

The Bethany House Shelter is seeing more and more families in need of a place to stay. With the current economy and job loss, whole families are sleeping in their cars, or over-crowding other family members in dwellings not meant for so many. Situations like these cause an escalation of stress, emotions, and hardships on those needing help and also on those trying to provide help.

It is not uncommon to see individuals who have reached such a high stress level that they have lost their abilities to “Stop,” “Focus,” and “Begin Again” in a new direction of goal setting and strategies. This is one of many reasons Bethany House exists. We provide a place where residents have the opportunities needed to take a deep breath, assess their situation with compassionate guidance, and take the necessary steps to start fresh in a positive direction.

The Bethany House Soup Kitchen is a busy place. So far this year we have served more than 25,000 lunch plates, provided more than 6,000 shoppers with food for 18,000 family members, and prepared over 300 food baskets that have fed more than 1,100 family members. Through your continued generosity, we are providing help to thousands of community members in their time of need.

Christmas House Moves to New Location

The Christmas House is undergoing a big change as we've moved into a new location at the former St. Ann Parish sanctuary. Student groups from ISU and church groups from St. Joseph's in Terre Haute and St Paul's in Greencastle have helped us pack, move, and begin the process of unpacking, organizing, and setting up a beautiful Christmas area where we anticipate helping over 1,000 families this year. We welcome donations of children's clothes and toys which are currently in short supply. Volunteers are needed in our relocation efforts and with shopper assistance when our Christmas Store is open during the weeks of December 3rd and 10th. We are hosting an Open House for the entire community on November 28th from 9am to 4pm and would love for you to come and check out our new location. For more information or to volunteer, call Dotty Crippen at 243-7218 or email dcrippen@catholiccharitiesterrehaute.org.

The Household Exchange

Through the Household Exchange several people displaced by the Garfield Towers fire were provided replacement furniture and household items. In addition to furniture and beds, appliances, linens, and clothing were distributed to many families on the list provided by the Terre Haute Housing Authority.
Kathy’s Story – Count Your Blessings

A recent resident of Bethany House, Kathy Houk, shares her feelings about the service that is provided to the community: “Bethany House and Catholic Charities is a blessing to have in the community, especially with the growing number of people who are becoming homeless due to the sluggish economy and expensive medical care. It would be wonderful if the Bethany House could move into a larger building so they could help more of those who want to improve their lives. I will be volunteering my time at Bethany House. It’s the least I can do for everything they have done for us.”

I was living the American Dream… married to a great man with whom I share two beautiful daughters – life was wonderful. My husband, Doug, owned his own semi and was an over-the-road truck driver. I spent my time happily taking care of our children and also breeding, raising, and selling Chinese Shar-Pei’s.

In 2004 after nearly 10 years of marriage, Doug left his semi driving job and went to work in an automotive factory. Our life was very comfortable until 2011 when the earthquake and tsunami hit Japan – impacting the auto industry in a big way and my husband lost his job. We were able to pay our rent for a while, but found it impossible to keep up with utilities, insurance and even grocery bills.

It seemed like a major blessing when a family friend offered us a place to stay, but just three days after moving all of our belongings into their home, our friend decided she wanted us to move out – and kept all of our belongings.

Shortly thereafter, I began having severe migraines and before too long, I had a grand mal seizure and a mini-stroke while working. I woke up in the hospital…not knowing who I was. It was four long months before my memory returned and during this time, my employer fired me.

Doug and I ended up living in our truck in the cold winter. Five to seven days would often pass between meals…we used our limited funds to keep fuel in the truck in order to stay warm. Soon Doug became very ill and weak, until just before Christmas, he was hospitalized. He spent two days in a coma, followed by four recovery days. I thought I was going to lose my best friend – talk about praying! The hospital staff became aware that we had nowhere to go, so the administrative director called another shelter program.

We spent about four months there, healing and getting our physical strength back, but we were eventually forced to leave. I was a bundle of nerves wondering what would come next! My husband looked at me and said, “God will take care of us; just keep your faith in him.” And that’s what we did. Together we prayed, keeping up our faith that God would see us through.

This is when we were welcomed into Bethany House. We felt like a weight had been lifted as we talked with the Director, Dottye, and shared about my husband’s work history. In just a few, short days, my husband was employed – and not just a minimum wage paying job, but one with good pay and insurance.

We remained at Bethany House for about six weeks and were provided with food, clothing, and other necessities while we saved our money for a deposit on an apartment. When we were ready to move out, the staff helped us pack and move, and even provided us with furniture and appliances from the Household Exchange to make our new home more comfortable. We now have our own apartment and my husband works full-time here in Terre Haute. Without the help of Bethany House, I honestly don’t know where we would be at today.

In today’s economy, we need more places like Bethany House, with employees who have knowledge of the community and compassion for the people who want to be self-sufficient in life again. We cannot say “thank you” enough for the help we have received from Bethany House and Catholic Charities. We are no longer on food stamps and can once again hold our heads proud. Doug recently said to me, “They say you should count your blessings, but quite frankly, we ran out of fingers and toes.”

Thank you, Bethany House and Catholic Charities; you have really made a difference in our lives.
Would you like an opportunity to reduce your state income tax liability while providing shelter for a homeless family? If so, you may be interested in Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) tax credits. Unlike a tax deduction, NAP credits are applied to your Indiana state tax liability – the bottom line taxes owed after all deductions are taken.

This year, Bethany House has been awarded more than $18,000 in NAP credits by the Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority to be used to provide temporary housing, case management, and support to single women, married couples, and families.

For every dollar you give ($100 minimum) to Catholic Charities, you may receive up to 50% of the contribution as a direct tax credit on your Indiana state income taxes.

Additionally, because Catholic Charities is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 organization, a NAP contribution may also be taken as a federal tax deduction. (Consult your tax advisor about your specific situation.) For more information on how you can take advantage of NAP credits, please visit www.catholiccharitiesterrehaute.org or contact Jennifer Buell at (812)232-1447.

Increasing Educational Opportunities Among Inner-city Children

Since 2007, the staff and volunteers at Ryves Youth Center have provided a strong emphasis on education for inner-city youth in Terre Haute. With the help of a full-time Education Coordinator and several community partners, the youth center is making a positive educational impact on many children.

Community partners such as AHEC, IU medical students, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, and the Vigo County School Corporation have helped to provide material, curriculum, and programming. They not only educate children but also motivate them to improve their grades in school. In the past year, Indiana State University has also made a solid commitment to helping improve the lives of our children.

During a recent discussion about the Ryves Reading and other educational programs, Mary Marty, Student Employment Programs Coordinator at Indiana State University, learned of the Youth Center’s emphasis on education. Mary offered ISU students, funded through Federal Work Study grants, as tutors for both math and reading. After many interviews, several tutors were employed. In addition to volunteers and educational activities, Ryves Youth Center at Etling Hall has three reading tutors and one math tutor each week night. Tutors are available Monday through Friday from 3:30pm until 7:30pm. There is no financial cost to receive tutoring.
The Foodbank Partners to Help the Hungry

Terre Haute Catholic Charities Foodbank, a member of the Feeding America network, works with 87 agencies in Clay, Greene, Knox, Parke, Sullivan, Vermillion, and Vigo counties to provide food to approximately 32,000 people each year. Because we provide food to pantries, soup kitchens, senior or youth centers, and other serving sites which distribute the food to clients in need, we don’t always hear personal stories of what this food means for others.

Recently Connie Norman, executive director of Parke County Community Food Pantry, wrote a letter expressing the importance of the Foodbank to the people they serve.

“On behalf of the Parke County Community Food Pantry, I would like to thank Terre Haute Catholic Charities Foodbank for their ongoing support. Together, we are able to supply over 1,126 people with enough food to eat. Below are just a couple examples of the people we are able to help because you help us.

A couple who recently pushed a double stroller with a 2-year-old and a 9-month-old nearly three miles in the rain, down a gravel road and were planning on carrying their food back home.

An 80-year-old veteran with tears in his eyes because he made it through a war, but cannot supply his cancer-stricken wife with enough food to eat.

I believe together we really can help this world to be a better place, one plate, one smile, one touch at a time.”

The power of the Foodbank is in the partnerships developed across our communities with 87 agencies, and we agree with Connie – together we can make a difference.

Orange Friday

One in six Hoosiers is food insecure. Because of staggering statistics like these, Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice of the Wabash Valley decided to start Orange Friday in the fall of 2009 to help make a difference. The concept of Orange Friday is simple: “Before you go shopping on Black Friday, feed the hungry on Orange Friday.” This year, Orange Friday will be on November 16th, so please mark your calendar and be ready to paint the town ORANGE!

All money raised this year will benefit Terre Haute Catholic Charities Foodbank and those they serve. The Foodbank provides food to 87 agencies in Clay, Greene, Knox, Parke, Sullivan, Vermillion and Vigo counties.

Orange ribbons will be on sale at the VNA Hospice office at 400 Eighth Ave., Terre Haute or at Baesler’s Market at 2900 Poplar Street, between 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. on November 16th for $3 each. For every $3 raised, we can help feed a family of 4 people.

Hussman Foundation Challenge Grant

Terre Haute Catholic Charities Foodbank has been given the opportunity to receive a matching grant in the amount of $5,000 from the Hussman Foundation to help the Foodbank provide help to the thousands of hungry individuals in our communities. In order to receive the grant, we need your help to raise $5,000.

To double the impact of your contribution, donate online at www.CatholicCharitiesTerreHaute.org and mark your contribution to the Hussman Foundation Matching Grant.

Leave a Legacy

If you are interested in supporting Catholic Charities while receiving annual income for the rest of your life, as well as a charitable tax deduction, please contact Jennifer Buell, development director, at jbuell@catholiccharitiesterrehaute.org or (812)232-1447 for a confidential conversation.

Upcoming Events

Share Your Thanksgiving Food & Funds Drive
October 19 - November 8

Orange Friday
November 16

Bread & Produce Market
November 17 & December 15

Christmas Store Open House
November 28, 9am - 4pm

Indiana Silver Gloves Boxing Tournament at Ryves Youth Center
December 1 & 2

Join us on Facebook

Like our page to keep up-to-date about what’s happening in our programs. www.facebook.com/CatholicCharitiesTerreHaute.
BackPack Program™ Continues to Grow

With the start of a new school year, we have seen the addition of three more BackPack programs while several of the existing programs continue to increase in numbers. Currently, a total of eight programs distribute nearly 3,200 BackPacks each month throughout five counties, with a sixth county anticipated by the end of 2012. While one out of four children living in our communities is food insecure, our partners are reaching out to make sure this population is not succumbing to hunger on their watch.

When the first program began nearly four years ago, just 200 BackPacks were sent home with students each month. As more communities learned they could help alleviate hunger for children over the weekend, the idea of a BackPack filled with nutritious, kid-friendly foods became more prevalent. For a minimal cost, our agencies help alleviate hunger and provide children with the nutrition they need to maintain their health and prepare them for the next week of school.

Without the generous support of several agencies, corporations, and individuals, this program would not be possible – leaving many children at risk for lack of food. Terre Haute Catholic Charities Foodbank is grateful for the donations and the work that goes into preparing these BackPacks each week. We know that with each BackPack filled, one less child will go home hungry.