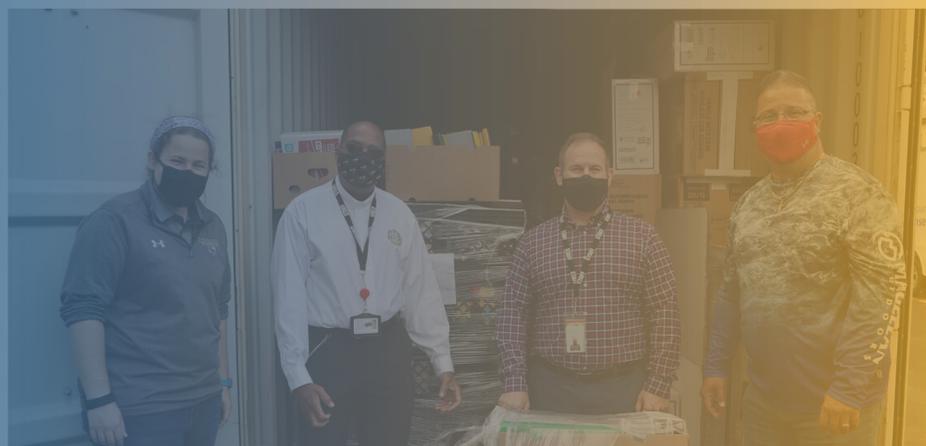




# Catholic Charities of Central Florida

A Ministry of the Diocese of Orlando

**PROVIDING HOPE & OPPORTUNITY**



# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

# ABOUT

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to embrace all those in need with hope, transforming their lives through faith, compassion, and service.

## OUR VISION

Our vision is that every person's basic human needs are met through love and empowerment.

## WHY WE SERVE

The Gospel of Jesus Christ calls us to love our neighbors and serve those in need. Our mission is rooted in the seven principals of Catholic Social Teaching.

1. Life and Dignity of the Human Person
2. Call to Family, Community, and Participation
3. Rights and Responsibilities
4. Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
5. The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
6. Solidarity
7. Care for God's Creation

**Catholic Charities of Central Florida**



*Come, you who are blessed by my Father.  
Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*  
(Matthew 25:34)

November, 2021

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

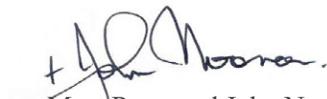
During our journey through the pandemic, what has God taught us? He has taught us about the treasure of each other. When the hurricanes and floods came, what is it that the people clung to? Their families, their neighbors. When the building collapsed in Miami, what is it that the search teams sought? Not things, but people. Jesus teaches us we are valuable, in and of ourselves because we are of God. We are the imprint of His being.

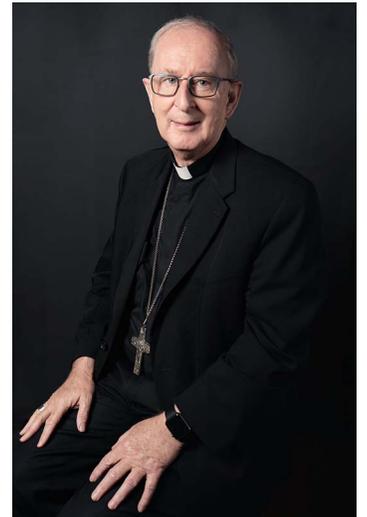
Knowing this we come before the Lord in the Sacrament of the Eucharist and receive Him to become His Presence on the earth, to be His blessing. Everything we have then is a blessing from God, from our rising to our sleep, we return to God what He has given to us in every measure.

Catholic Charities of Central Florida is an organization within the Diocese of Orlando whose staff leads us to live out God's blessing. We use our time or our resources to help the poor for we are His mercy every day. We minister to and pray with parents in crisis pregnancies because we bring God's compassion to them. We open our doors to those who have no homes just as we would welcome Joseph and Mary as they sought shelter to deliver Emmanuel into the world. We offer the salve of healing words to the stranger as we encounter Jesus. We counsel those who are lost and care medically for the forsaken. We are the body of Christ as we immerse God's people with holiness.

Open these pages and study this annual report to know the beauty of the body of Christ. May we be worthy to inherit the kingdom.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

  
+ John Noonan  
Most Reverend John Noonan  
Bishop of Orlando





Dear Friends of Catholic Charities,

Catholic Charities of Central Florida (CCCF) was truly blessed in this past fiscal year as staff and volunteers responded with conviction of faith and joy to families and individuals in need. The continuing economic and emotional toll resulting from the COVID pandemic made day-to-day living for many vulnerable families and individuals more challenging, and, through God's blessings and the gracious support of funders and donors, CCCF was able to help more than 280,000 individuals meet those challenges! At a time when many providers of social services struggled due to the ever-increasing demands on their resources, CCCF moved deeper into the turmoil to help those most in need. Consider some of these accomplishments:

- As demand for food support continued to occur at a high rate, CCCF harmonized with Holy Redeemer Parish in Kissimmee to celebrate the grand opening of a new Agape Mission Market.
- To meet ever-increasing financial needs of families in Brevard and Polk counties, CCCF secured funding to add additional Family Stability Program case managers to each county. A new office was opened in Brevard County, in partnership with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Conference, on the campus of St. Joseph Parish in Palm Bay. A new office was opened, as part of our new Multi-Ministry Service Center, in harmonization with St. Joseph Parish in Lakeland.
- Our rapid rehousing team serving Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties has doubled in size as we strive to help families and individuals find and secure safe, affordable housing.
- Our Immigration and Refugee programs responded to new arrivals from Haiti and Venezuela fleeing economic and political conditions in their countries, conducting public information sessions on paperwork requirements and then reviewing literally thousands of cases.
- Our Resurrection Property Management Company continued to grow, assuming management of St. Joseph Garden Court in Orlando and Ascension Manor in Melbourne.
- We were blessed to launch the Walking with Moms in Need ministry, providing diapers, baby supplies, laundry supplies and feminine hygiene products to families with young children struggling to make ends meet.
- Volunteers from the Catholic Campus Ministry at the University of Central Florida and Bishop Moore Catholic High School helped to carry our food ministries on the main campus during times of exceptional demand.

Building on these blessings, CCCF will continue to seek opportunities to harmonize with parishes to determine how best to help our brothers and sisters in need. As the world around us seems to be more and more chaotic and as families face mounting challenges, we pray we will continue to be blessed to serve as the hands and feet of Jesus, serving the hungry, the homeless, the naked, the sick and others living in central Florida. We also pray in gratitude for the thousands of families and individuals who engage with us in our mission of embracing those in need with hope, transforming their lives through faith, compassion and service.

Realistically, these successes can't happen without God's grace and the generous support of passionate donors and volunteers. On behalf of our boards of directors, our staff and those families and individuals we are privileged to serve, thank you for sharing in our ministry!

We invite you to join us by sharing your time, your talent and your treasure as together we are the hands and feet of Jesus, reaching out to those struggling to find hope and stability in a world that often appears hopeless and unstable. Thank you for making our ministries possible!

God bless you today and always!

Gary Tester,  
President

Chris Gardner  
CCCF Corporate Board Chairman





*“The bread you store up belongs to the hungry; the cloak that lies in your chest belongs to the naked; the gold you have hidden in the ground belongs to the poor.”*  
- St. Basil the Great



Through the generosity of our many donors, Catholic Charities of Central Florida is supported in the provision of numerous ministries serving those in need. Without this generosity, these ministries would simply not be possible. For a listing of donors supporting CCCF ministries in Fiscal Year 2021 please visit [www.cflcc.org](http://www.cflcc.org).



*Thank you for joining us in loving ministry to those we are privileged to serve!*



# RENOVATED HOME

Lodges Immigrant Family



## Shelter

Walking into the three-bedroom, two-bath home recently renovated by Catholic Charities of Central Florida was “a dream come true” for Yahumary Martinez and her family. “I was in shock. I cried,” said Martinez, recalling the moment she opened the door. As emotions peaked, she had to pause and take it all in.

Martinez left Cuba in 2013, fleeing death threats and violence. As one of the Ladies in White (Damas de Blanco), an opposition movement of women related to jailed dissidents who protest imprisonments by attending Mass on Sunday, wearing white dresses, she and her daughter were targeted as counter revolutionaries. Fearing for their lives, the family fled to the U.S.

Soon after her arrival, she sought out Catholic Charities of Central Florida. Staff members helped her in attaining residency, gave her food, and helped her son, who has epilepsy, with school. Two years later, when her son was diagnosed with a form of bone cancer, Catholic Charities was there again and still provides a case manager to help him navigate his medical and educational needs. "They have supported me in everything," she noted gratefully.

For the past six years the family has shared a small, crowded space, so when she qualified for one of the homes Catholic Charities renovated with its partnership with the City of Orlando, she could not believe it. "Because this is something we could never have in Cuba, for me this is a tremendous gift," she said.

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*"We knew that working, we could get ahead and succeed."*

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"I know many refugees will come after me and that brings me joy... I always knew coming to this country was coming to a land of opportunity," she said. She remembers arriving knowing no one, not even the language. "We knew that working, we could get ahead and succeed. That always remained foremost in my mind."

The Martinez's home is the fourth one donated by the City of Orlando to Catholic Charities of Central Florida in a commitment to provide affordable housing. The home has been upgraded and remodeled with new appliances, new paint and new flooring. Father Anthony Aarons blessed the home before the new homeowners signed their lease.

Martinez says she is thankful to God, "without whom any of this would be possible and for this country for allowing us to come." She added, "And great gratitude to Catholic Charities, not just for me, but for all immigrants who knock on their door because I know they open, no matter the color, race, or where they are from. They never say no. They help as much as they can and give above and beyond. I have seen it and lived it."

**\$150,000 and **

spent on rent/mortgage and utility assistance and other services for those affected by COVID

**50 households/  
month**

Locally in Orange, Osceola and Seminole

**23,000+**

individuals served/month

## Samantha

"I was shot in my head by a stray bullet while sleeping at home back in September 2019, and of course, that has affected my job. I have been out of work for over two years because of the injury. I had my surgery in January 2020 to remove the bullet. It was a risk because they told me I could be paralyzed after removing the bullet, but thinking about my 4-year-old son with special needs, I had to pray about it and take that leap of faith to remove the bullet. I still have issues with my head. I have chronic headaches. It's consistent, so as a result of that, I'm not back at work yet.

"I heard about Catholic Charities and have been getting assistance from them for my son

with special needs. I can always look to them, especially for my baby diapers and personal hygienic stuff. I'm a single parent, so it's just me and my son, so this has been a tremendous help for me and my son because when I call, I don't have the money. My son is autistic and he has behavioral issues along with other birth delay issues, so he would use more diapers than an average child would use per day, so Catholic Charities has been a great help. It has been a tremendous help, and I wanted to show how appreciative I am!"



# PANTRY REOPENS

Holy Redeemer Parish in Kissimmee



With unemployment on the rise and increasing need due to the pandemic, Holy Redeemer Parish in Kissimmee joined with Catholic Charities of Central Florida to make a difference. The reinvigorated food pantry reopened in February 2021.

A grant received through Osceola County enabled the purchase of new equipment, shelving, fridges, freezers and more. Ideally, it will be a mission market style pantry, where clients can stroll through and make their own selections. However, until the pandemic is over, pre-packed deliveries will continue due to “no safe way to accommodate shopping,” explained Gary Tester, president of CCCF.

Tester noted the pantry will become “part of a multi-ministry service center.” There will be a part-time case manager

along with legal and health services.

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*Osceola County led  
the state’s unemployment  
rate with 9.7%.*

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According to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, in November 2020, Osceola County led the state’s unemployment rate with 9.7%. Many parishioners and area residents work

in the hospitality industry which was greatly affected by the pandemic, and even more jobs were lost on January 1, once the holiday demand ended.

The market is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If you are interested in volunteering, call Holy Redeemer Parish at 407-847-2500.



## Bella

*"This volunteering experience has meant a lot because it really opened my eyes to the help that we can give our community just 15 minutes down the road. It's really crazy because you don't realize how big of a population needs your help until you really go out and look for them, and it's just really eye-opening. I think one of the most impactful things is seeing everyone's attitude who comes through the line to get food. Everyone's really overall happy, despite them having to come get food 'cause maybe they can't afford it or whatever situation they're in. They're still just happy to be here—happy to be alive. It kinda puts things into perspective.*

*"I think this showed me that I don't need to go to another country to help people because there are more than enough to help here. It's still a good thing obviously, but there are so many people to help right here."*

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Bella is a junior at Bishop Moore Catholic High School and was a part of the Calcutta Mission Trip at Catholic Charities of Central Florida in March of 2020, where she served with multiple ministries.

## Samantha

*"Since COVID hit, I lost my job. I was an aid, and a lot of patients had passed. I recently just got two jobs, so still trying to pick things up before I can stop coming here, but they are always a blessing. A little bit goes a long way.*

*"Instead of having to go food shopping constantly, I save about \$80 instead of having to spend it. It's a lot easier. We have a family of 10. In addition to my own family, I am taking care of my sister's kids, since she had passed last year because of COVID. I took in her kids for her, so I'm taking on her four as well. There are just more mouths to feed and everything seems to be going up more often for bills, but the food has been a big help.*

*"It's always healthy food. The people here are very considerate. They are always out helping and making sure you're fine before you leave. Compared to other food banks I've been to, I love this one to be honest."*

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Samantha has been receiving help at the Agape Mission Market – Orlando (East) since November 2020.

# Feed

# POST-ABORTIVE HEALING

through Project Rachel

Thanks to “the prompting of the Holy Spirit” and a clear need within the Diocese of Orlando, Catholic Charities of Central Florida’s Culture of Life Office now offers help to post-abortive women and men through Project Rachel.

This is a ministry of the Catholic Church in the U.S. to those who have been impacted by abortion. It is a diocesan-based network of specially trained priests, religious, counselors, and laypersons who provide a team response of care for those suffering in the aftermath of abortion. In addition to referring for Sacramental Reconciliation, the ministry provides an integrated network of services, including pastoral counseling, support groups, Rachel’s Vineyard Retreats, and referrals to licensed mental health professionals. It is open to all! People of all faiths or no faith.

Director of the Culture of Life Office, Leidy Rivas, noted dialogue with clergy and crisis pregnancy center staff in the area made clear the need for such a ministry. In the past, they had to resort to neighboring dioceses for post-abortive healing ministries.

Rivas said, “I think it’s one of the most important assignments that I have been called to do. Something that I personally know is going to present a lot of challenges ahead because I

know the enemy is there trying not to bring this to fulfillment. But already hearing the stories from a number of women and the pain and struggle they have and how they suffer in silence, I, as a Christian, just want to do whatever I can to help them know that there is healing through Christ. That He is there and we will walk with them.”

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*“I think it’s one of the most important assignments that I have been called to do.”*

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Bishop John Noonan noted the power of redemptive love to heal. Quoting Pope Francis in his recent encyclical, Fratelli Tutti (Brothers All), he said, “I invite everyone to renewed hope, for hope ‘speaks to us of something deeply rooted in every human heart, independently of our circumstances and historical conditioning. Hope speaks to us of a thirst, an aspiration,

a longing for a life of fulfillment, a desire to achieve great things, things that fill our heart and lift our spirit to lofty realities like truth, goodness and beauty, justice and love...Let us continue, then, to advance along the paths of hope.’ The ministries of Project Rachel and Rachel’s Vineyard profoundly welcome those who are suffering to the body of Christ, instilling within each one God’s desire for goodness, His redemptive love.”

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*If you or someone you know is suffering after abortion you may email [projectrachel@cflcc.org](mailto:projectrachel@cflcc.org) or call our confidential helpline (407) 222-8584.*



## Amarilis

*"I was forced to have [my daughter]. I was forced to conceive her, so it wasn't something that I wanted because I was already a single parent with [two toddlers]. I was barely making it with them. Having a third child I felt was going to be too much because I could barely provide for them. By the end of [the relationship], I had nothing. I was nothing. I had nowhere to go. We were homeless. We had nothing. Literally nothing.*

*"I didn't even know what to do with her. Really, I didn't, and it hurt because I had to choose between my toddlers and my daughter, and that's not fair. It wasn't fair that I was put into that situation. That I had to choose between my kids. I feel like if I would have made any other decision, it would've hurt me more than whatever I have to endure to make sure they're ok.*

*"Honestly, when I met Ms. Shenika, I was in [a domestic violence shelter] with both of the kids—pregnant. She has been one of the best people I probably could have met because when I met her, I didn't have too much hope left. You know what I'm saying? I needed something to ground me, so that I could keep being the mom I had to be for my kids. And I mean Ms. Leidy... I didn't have anything for my daughter. I had nothing for her, so if it weren't for her, she wouldn't have nothing to be in. Literally. I'm grateful... without Ms. Shenika, I don't know where I'd be right now. I don't know where my kids would be. I come from nothing. I come from nowhere. So having them okay is all that matters to me."*

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Amarilis fled an abusive relationship while pregnant and chose life for her baby. Although she initially chose adoption for her daughter, she decided against it. Shenika Frett (Case Manager, Family Stability Program) and Leidy Rivas (Director, Culture of Life) were able to help her get into an apartment with all of the essentials for her new baby.

## Steve

*"Last October, I had a surgery, and I have been in a wheelchair since October of 2020. I had arterial blood clots and a seven and a half-hour surgery. I was relatively healthy before that. Found out I was diabetic, and in February, I had some heart problems, and they put two stents in. They gave me a CT scan, and they told me, 'Your heart is the least of your problems. We don't know how to tell you this, but you have 19 clots on your lungs, and there are two of them within a half-inch of your heart. We can't even give you a medical reason why you're still alive.'*

*"One pulmonary embolism normally kills people. There were doctors coming from all over to see the guy who had 19 blood clots. When they said, 'We cannot give you any medical reason,' well I said, 'I know there's a reason that I'm alive—that is my Lord Jesus Christ and God.' And I believe that. They told me I only had a couple of weeks to live, and that was last February, and I'm still here.*

*"God has given me a lot of peace and the strength to deal with this. And I am very grateful for this opportunity here at Pathways. This is perfect for me, and I'm very grateful. The staff here is tremendous. They are very dedicated to what they do. And I'm extremely grateful for this program. God has really opened a lot of doors for me, and I feel different now, than I have in a lot of years of my life."*

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In addition to everything else, Steve had to have his left leg amputated. He is currently a patient and recuperating at Pathways to Care, an assisted living facility run by Catholic Charities of Central Florida that allows the financially-insecure to recover from serious injury or illness.

# Love

# SAFETY AT THE FOREFRONT

Serious Learning at Fun Family Event



# Awareness

Deputies and dedicated Catholics joined forces in the summer of 2021 for fun and a very serious message. In the midst of live music, free games, and food trucks, the task force warned families of the hidden dangers of human trafficking online.

"We want to bring awareness of human trafficking and what it is because not everyone knows about it or they only know what they see from the movies," said Traci Mayfield, juvenile intervention officer with the Seminole County Sheriff's Office. "We want to equip people with the right information."

The free event coincided with World Day Against Child Labor June 12. It helped both parents and children how

to spot warning signs in a fun, interactive environment at Reiter Park in Longwood.

The Diocese of Orlando Human Trafficking Task Force (DOHTTF) partners with these task forces hoping to highlight the inherent dignity of all God's people and to create awareness to prevent the atrocities of human trafficking before they occur.



## Kemissa, José, and Maria

*"It's been a long journey! When I found this program, it changed my life a little bit 'cause I was going through depression, and Ms. Kim came by one time a week to check on me. Nobody else cared, but she was the one who came to check up on me or text me, 'Are you ok?' And she said, if I am feeling some type a way to call her anytime. This program helped me get to this day."*

-Kemissa came from Haiti four years ago

*"My sister and me, we're really grateful because it was a big opportunity for us. When we got our asylum approved, they helped us with information about everything we had to do with our papers, our documents... everything. Without this program it would have been a longer process. We are very grateful for them because it was a big impact on us."*

-José came from Venezuela almost four years ago

*"It was a great experience for me because they helped me a lot with a lot of things. They helped me in school and they really helped me with my English. And they gave me a lot of good opportunities to know some good places here in Orlando, and I met a lot of people with them too. They changed my life in a positive way, and I feel grateful for that."*

-María came from Cuba six years ago.

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Kemissa, José, and Maria celebrated their graduation with Catholic Charities of Central Florida's Comprehensive Refugee Services team members, who were instrumental in helping them get acclimated and settled in the United States. Kemissa hopes to become a registered nurse. José hopes to be an engineer or go into business. Maria is joining the Navy.

## Negta

*"Catholic Charities is my family. That is my favorite part. It's also been a beautiful experience to see how God has worked especially during this pandemic. I have seen His providential hand and how He has been able to plant His seed during this time. He has provided food and people. He has provided financially. No one leaves hungry. Everyone has hands full of food. That's a beautiful blessing."*

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Negta has been volunteering with Catholic Charities of Central Florida in the Mission Market for four years. She supervises four adults with special needs who also volunteer with her Monday through Friday each week. Negta wants to make sure everyone knows that they need a lot more volunteers!

# Inclusion

# WELCOME THE STRANGER



Catholic Charities  
of Central Florida  
Diocese of Orlando

280,064

PEOPLE

received assistance

(July 2020 through June 2021).

16,324

HOURS

served by volunteers

(July 2020 through June 2021).

20 LOCATIONS

ACROSS 9 COUNTIES

in Central Florida

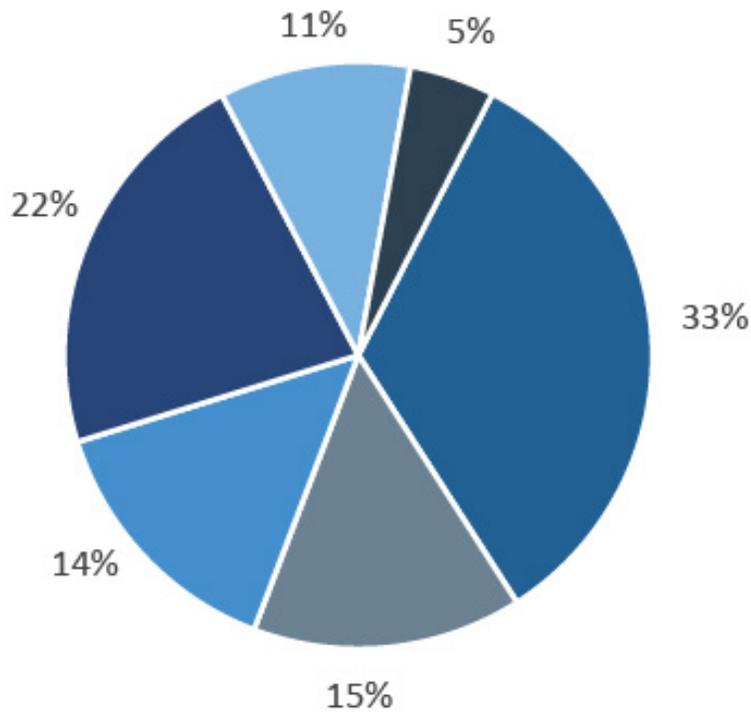
(as of September 1, 2021).

# BY THE NUMBERS & HEARTS



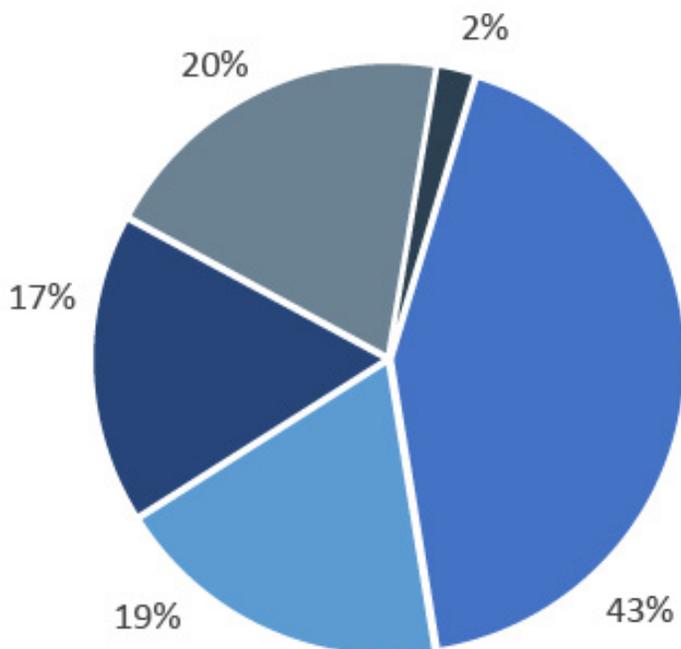
# Financial Statement

## Support and Revenue



Federal, State, Local	\$4,267,299
Contributions	\$1,897,198
Diocesan Support	\$1,847,130
Fees & Rents	\$2,823,424
Fundraising	\$1,344,653
Other	\$597,973
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$12,777,677</b>

## Expenses



Community & Support Services	\$5,251,109
Healthcare Services	\$2,275,592
Housing	\$2,069,493
Management & General	\$2,421,496
Fundraising	\$253,831
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$12,271,521</b>

# CONNECT



**Catholic Charities  
of Central Florida**  
A Ministry of the Diocese of Orlando

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