

WITNESS OF HOPE
STORIES OF
YOUR IMPACT



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SAINT PAUL &
MINNEAPOLIS

Catholic Services Appeal

Quarterly Newsletter

FALL 2026

HONORING LIFE AT EVERY STAGE

As we settle into October, Respect Life Month, I am grateful for the many ways that **the Catholic Services Appeal (CSA) honors life at every stage, from its beginning through support for pregnancy resource centers, to its final moments with hospital ministry, and in between through ministries that provide housing, address food insecurity, educate, and care for those in need.**

In this issue, you will encounter further how your support of the CSA helps uphold the dignity of life for some of our most vulnerable brothers and sisters in Christ: preborn children, those who are incarcerated, and individuals with disabilities.

We are all made in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:27), yet sometimes our world forgets this truth. **When pre-born babies are not acknowledged as human persons, those who are incarcerated are defined by their past, and those who are differently abled are not welcomed, we are called to respond with compassion and love.**

Through the CSA, you help shine Christ's light into these places of need and affirm the God-given dignity of every person.

Thank you for caring for all life and being a light in this world!

In Gratitude,



Marci Franzen, Director of the Catholic Services Appeal
Associate Director of Mission Advancement
Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis



Marci Franzen, Director of the CSA and
Associate Director of Mission Advancement,
Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

**“So God created
man in his own
image, in the
image of God he
created him”**

Genesis 1:27

NETWORK OF HOPE FOR MOTHERS AND BABIES

Strengthening care for women and families through a unified network of support with ELevate Life.



Options for Women | Cornerstone employees hold a client's triplet baby girls.

For 52 years, Elevate Life has supported pregnancy resource centers and clinics across the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Working largely behind the scenes, we provide the resources, training, grants, and broad-based support that enable these centers not only to operate, but to thrive as they serve women and families in need.

Through the generosity of the Catholic Services Appeal, your donations are multiplied across 51 center and clinic locations, helping ensure that more women and families receive the care and support they deserve.

Recently, Patty Washatka, Executive Director of Options for Women | Cornerstone in St. Michael, shared the impact of being an affiliated center within the Elevate Life Network.

Many pregnancy resource centers operate on very limited budgets. As part of a network of more than 51 center or clinic locations, they can stretch their resources further, Washatka explains.

“Through cost-sharing efforts with other centers, Elevate Life has helped us steward our finances more wisely, reducing expenses and allowing more of our resources to go directly toward caring for the people God has entrusted to us.”

Washatka adds, “A clear example is the reduction in insurance costs and the coverage provided for training—especially legal informational sessions. The education and guidance have been invaluable, helping me lead a more efficient and sustainable operation while navigating constant regulatory changes in our state. Knowing I can rely on Elevate Life to help us stay aligned, informed, and prepared has brought a sense of clarity and confidence I did not have before.”

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The CSA helps more than 51 center or clinic locations stretch their limited resources further through the Elevate Life network.



An Options for Women | Cornerstone client holds her baby.

BRINGING CHRIST'S LOVE BEHIND PRISON WALLS

Answering God's call - Matthew 25:36 through Twin Cities Prison Ministry



For more than 11 years, Fay and Kevin Connors have led Twin Cities Prison Ministry (TCPM) with a mission to bring Christ's love and hope to people who are incarcerated and to their families. Through the support of Catholic Services Appeal donors, this ministry reaches people who can often feel forgotten or separated from their communities and gives them opportunities to encounter Christ.

That encounter is bearing fruit.

On Pentecost Sunday in May 2026, Archbishop Hebda confirmed two men at Lino Lakes Correctional Facility. Today, 10 men are participating in OCIA—five at Lino Lakes and five at Rush City—with hopes of receiving the sacrament of Confirmation next spring. TCPM is also looking toward expanding its ministry at Rush City Correctional Facility.



St. Thomas University students wrote Christmas cards to the incarcerated last year.

**These are more than numbers.
They are men discovering that
God has not forgotten them.**

TCPM's ministry extends beyond sacramental preparation. It offers many ways to accompany those affected by incarceration, including retreats, prayer companions, pen pals, mentoring, support groups for families, transitional housing, and weekly Ignatian Scripture reflections.

With Christmas approaching, there are simple ways for parishes and church groups to serve through TCPM.

Through the Christmas Card Ministry, volunteers send anonymous cards with messages of hope and God's love to incarcerated men and women. Through the Angel Tree program, volunteers purchase and deliver Christmas gifts on behalf of incarcerated parents to their children.

These simple acts remind those behind prison walls and their families that they are not forgotten and are loved by God and His Church.

Please pray for the 10 men currently participating in OCIA, all who are incarcerated, their families, and those who accompany them.

Learn more about the [Christmas Card Ministry](#) or the [Angel Tree](#) program to see if it's a good fit for your church or group.

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**Men who are incarcerated
are going through OCIA this
year and hope to be brought
into the Catholic Church in
the Spring of 2027.**

ENRICHING THE FAMILY OF THE CHURCH

Confirmation classes and Mass for those with disabilities

It was a gloomy early fall day on September 13. But in St. Mary's Chapel in St. Paul, there was a spirit of joy and celebration.

Nine Catholics were confirmed by Archbishop Hebda. Yet, this wasn't an ordinary Confirmation Mass.

Each of the confirmands participated in confirmation classes specifically adapted for Catholics with a variety of intellectual, physical, and developmental needs. They attended two preparation classes with their caregiver, with instruction designed to meet each person and family where they are. Classes included simple language, pictures and other accessible learning materials, along with periodic breaks and an environment thoughtfully chosen to accommodate sensory needs.

This program is offered through the archdiocese's Office of Discipleship and Evangelization, led by Deacon Eric Gunderson,



Archbishop Hebda confirms a participant of the classes for those with disabilities.



Archbishop Hebda blesses the confirmed.

assisted by Sonya Flomo, Executive Assistant of the department at the Archdiocesan Catholic Center.

The Catholic Services Appeal helps make this ministry possible by supporting Deacon Gunderson's time, curriculum and educational materials, as well as the Confirmation Mass and social for the confirmands and their families.

During his homily, Archbishop Hebda spoke of the unique gifts these brothers and sisters bring to those around them. They not only enrich their families, he said, but also enrich the family of the Church.

And on this day, surrounded by their families, nine newly confirmed Catholics gave joyful witness to that truth. Through their gifts, their lives and their faith, they remind all of us that every person has a unique and irreplaceable place in the Body of Christ.

The Catholic Spirit covered a story about one of the Confirmation class participants, high school senior, Nate Pfister. Read about his experience [here](#).

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Individuals were confirmed by Archbishop Hebda in a beautiful celebration of faith after taking classes that were specifically designed to support people with disabilities.



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The 2025 CSA Impact Report is here!

See how your generosity changed lives last year.



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DISCIPLESHIP &
EVANGELIZATION

WITNESS OF HOPE

CSA Quarterly Newsletter

Witness of Hope is a quarterly newsletter that shares inspiring accounts of the ministries, individuals, and communities made stronger through your support, showing how together, we are bringing Christ's love and hope to others.

Thank you for reading this issue of *Witness of Hope*, please let us know your thoughts or story suggestions by calling 651-291-4533 or emailing csainformation@archspm.org.



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