

# Faith in the Future

DECEMBER 2025

## MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



**T**his past February, still finding my feet as President & CEO of Catholic Charities, I wrote in that month's newsletter about how excited I was by what lies ahead in 2025 and looking forward to "taking this journey with all of you as we honor the past while building a brighter future together." Since then, in what feels like a lifetime of stories of hope and resilience, I am overwhelmed by the compassion I witness on a daily basis. Amidst the everyday challenges of overseeing a large charitable

organization, I get to experience heartwarming moments that reinforce the reason I am here. The journey has been so much more than I anticipated.

Earlier this month, I had the opportunity to spend a delightful afternoon at Delacroix Restaurant in New Orleans. At this special holiday luncheon were five women from our **St. Rosalie Community Home** in Gretna on the West Bank. St. Rosalie is a permanent residence for adult women with intellectual disabilities who are unable to care for themselves. The small, yet

impactful staff taking care of these women are not just providing essential care and assistance, but are also creating new memories with them. On any given day of the week, one can find these



direct care professionals accompany the women on trips to Lakeside Mall or the bowling alley. But this day at Delacroix seemed to resonate deeply for the St. Rosalie women and staff. Thank you to Chef John Besh, Head Chef Wiley Wilkinson Lewis and her team (plus some Happy Santas) for going above and beyond to create a joyful experience that created lasting memories for these women.



In November, I was fortunate to attend a special welcome mass for **Coadjutor Archbishop James Checchio** at St. Louis Cathedral. No words could fully describe how significant this historical

day was for me. When his appointment was first announced in September, Catholic Charities was included on his shortlist of site visits. We were able to host a visit with him and Archbishop Aymond at our PACE program in the Bywater. I was very touched to see how effortlessly Archbishop Checchio greeted seniors and staff with kindness and attentiveness. I'm excited to begin working with Archbishop Checchio and am immensely grateful to Archbishop Aymond for setting a high bar for leadership in the community.

As I conclude my first year with Catholic Charities, I want to thank you for being part of this incredible journey. Together, we've shared stories, spread kindness, and supported one another.

I wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

With gratitude and blessings,  


Cynthia T. Hayes  
President and CEO  
Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans

## Devoted mother and daughter lend their time to Christmas Drive



Thank you to Hope (L) and Lois (R) Cambre for their incredible dedication in organizing and preparing donated clothing and items for families this Christmas! Their longtime commitment to Catholic Charities shines brightly, making a real difference in the community.



Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans provides life-giving programs that deliver health and human services to the most vulnerable and needy throughout 8 civil parishes in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. We serve people regardless of race, religion, age, ethnicity or economic status.

[www.ccano.org](http://www.ccano.org)



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Catholic Charities in your will.

## Catholic Charities Archbishop Hannan Community Appeal

**T**hank you to everyone who has supported our Archbishop Hannan Community Appeal! Together, we've raised over \$750,000 toward our \$2 million goal! Your generosity is transforming lives and making a real difference in our community. There's still time to give and honor Archbishop Philip Hannan's legacy of compassion and support. Visit [www.ccano.org/ahca](http://www.ccano.org/ahca) or simply scan the QR code. Let's come together to support those in need—your compassion can light the way for someone struggling.



## Ursuline Students Join Seniors for Tai Chi

Our amazing seniors from the PACE program enjoyed a refreshing trip to the Pontchartrain Lakefront, dedicated to honing their tai chi skills! Joined by the wonderful students from Ursuline Academy, they embraced a day filled with laughter, connection, and service. Together, they shared stories and built bridges across generations.



## Annual Clothe-a-Child Drive Supports Families this Christmas

A HUGE THANK YOU to the Council of Catholic School Cooperative Clubs (CCSCC)! Their tireless fundraising and shopping for the Clothe-a-Child event are truly inspiring. Their compassion and generosity light up our community. Each November, volunteers gather at Walmart in Kenner to gift-wrap clothing for Head Start students at all four locations.

Together, we're making a difference in the lives of those in need.



## Allyson Tuttle Honored with Advocacy Award

Congratulations to Allyson Tuttle, director of Project SAVE, who was selected as the winner of the 2025 Legal Service Excellence in Advocacy Award. Allyson was honored at the LSBA's Louisiana Justice Community Conference on November 21st. This award, given by the Louisiana State Bar Association's Access to Justice Program, annually recognizes an attorney who has displayed the highest level of dedication, passion, and professionalism in representing vulnerable clients. She has garnered the recognition and admiration of her peers through her tireless work as an advocate for domestic violence survivors with Catholic Charities' Project SAVE.



Allyson with Monte Mollere, retired LSBA's Access to Justice Director

## St. Rosalie Community Provides Home to Women Facing Challenges

Although the adult women at the St. Rosalie Community Home stay busy with regular outings or activities at their residence in Gretna, the first week of Advent they engaged in a unique experience: eating at Delacroix — the new John Besh restaurant in downtown New Orleans.

Surrounded by festive decor, delicious dishes, and even representatives from the Happy Santas, the ladies seemed to savor every moment of this unique holiday celebration. The trip wasn't far from their home on the Westbank — a permanent residence that offers adult women with intellectual disabilities a safe, nurturing environment where they can thrive. Six of the eight available spots at St. Rosalie are currently filled.

Rosalind Freeman, 60, has been at St. Rosalie since 2016. Her mother, battling Leukemia, was nearing the point where she would no longer be able to take care of Rosalind. Fortunately, she was able to find Rosalind a loving home at St. Rosalie before she passed in 2017.

Rosalind, still missing her mother, talks about how they endured so much together before her passing. She volunteered in the Ochsner cafeteria in Belle Chasse for 31 years working in the same building as her mom.



Delacroix Head Chef Wiley Wilkinson Lewis checks in with St. Rosalie resident Rosalind Freeman.

Fran Johnson, manager of St. Rosalie, has been working diligently to help Rosalind and the women at St. Rosalie find volunteer or part-time work again. She said that since Hurricane Katrina, it has been challenging to match residents with opportunities. She has not given up and remains hopeful she can find something for everyone.

Rosalind leads a life at St. Rosalie almost like everyone else. She is regularly frustrated by the New Orleans Saints, goes shopping, visits Lakeside Mall, and goes out to eat regularly with the other women and staff. Formerly part of a bowling league, she bested her roommate during a recent trip to the bowling alley.

The majority of people who drive by the small brick building that houses the women of St. Rosalie may not realize the amount of joy and community that emanates from it. Staying true to the mission of Catholic Charities, St. Rosalie is helping nurture an environment where everyone can embrace dignity and hope. It is certain that the holiday lunch at Delacroix was a perfect reminder of that mission—a small, yet powerful gathering!

## St. Elizabeth's Guild Members visit Padua House

We were excited to welcome members of the St. Elizabeth's Guild, including President Lisa Baynham, to Padua House. Alongside AHCA chairs Kevin and Nancy Colomb, they toured Padua — a residential program for those of all ages with intellectual disabilities who are medically fragile.

Our heartfelt thanks to the Guild's unwavering support of Padua House, Therapeutic Family Services, and Homeless Services.



## St. Michael Special School Hosts Visit from CCANO

Shout out to St. Michael Special School for their hospitality. Marcel Lacour from the Development team at Catholic Charities had a fantastic time chatting with the students about the agency's work. Thank you to everyone at the school

who has given their time over the years to Catholic Charities.

Their support means the world!

