



# CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY<sup>®</sup> OF MILWAUKEE

## WHERE LOVE LEADS TO ACTION

### Spring 2024 Newsletter

#### From the Presidents

The gardens are looking like it's July already with all the rain that we have had recently!! As the gardens grow, so do the Programs of the Christ Child Society.

We are very proud and thankful for all the Directors & Chairs of our Programs. We want to recognize and thank the outgoing Board members for their support during the past few years.

Kathy Rave & Leslie Lorino – Events

Diane Hicks – Marketing

Deb Benson – Follow the Child

Jane Frisch – Resale Shop

Judie Hermann – Membership

We also want to thank the members who stepped forward to serve on the Executive Board for 2024 to 2026.

Margaret Krahe – Secretary

Kathy Powers & Christine Friar – Event

Maria Strehlow & Diane Hicks – Fundraising

Jen Rentmeester – Marketing

Laurie Derus – Follow the Child

Cathy Smaglik – Resale Shop

Please watch for our NEW Impact Report that will be coming out soon. This piece of communication will keep our members, partners, donors and sponsors up to date on our progress of serving the infants and children of the greater Milwaukee area.

*Judy Keenan  
Kathleen Semrad*

*Nothing is ever too much to do for a child*



#### Inside the Issue

##### Page 2

Spring Mass & Banquet

##### Page 3

Red Shoe Award

##### Page 4

Honoring Vision Screeners

##### Page 5

Resale Report

##### Page 6

My Stuff

##### Page 7

Second Saturday

##### Page 8

Literacy

##### Page 9

Layettes

##### Page 10

Farewell, Fr. Michael

##### Page 11

Memorials

##### Page 12

Social Media

## 75 Years of Service to Children: A Legacy of Hope and Impact

The Milwaukee chapter wrapped up our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary year with the Spring Mass and Banquet on May 9. The evening started at Our Lady of Good Hope church with Mass officiated by our spiritual advisor Father Michael Lawinger. We welcomed nine new members who spent the year as provisionals and now are ready to really help us with our work. We also inducted our new board members, who received a blessing from Father Michael. We wish our new officers well in their new positions.

From there we drove to the Good Hope location of the Wisconsin Club and enjoyed a delicious meal. Our program included naming our annual Red Shoe Award winner – Holly Ryan – and acknowledging the Mary Virginia Merrick Anniversary Awards to 14 women who have served our chapter for many years. Each woman received a certificate and a long stem white rose.



- *New provisionals stand with their sponsors and are received into the Christ Child Society*
- *Longtime members are honored for their years of service*
- *Everyone enjoyed the social gathering during the evening.*
- *Fr. Michael blessed the incoming board members*

# Holly Ryan Receives the 2024 Red Shoe Award

## A Remarkable Journey of Service and Leadership

The Christ Child Society of Milwaukee is proud to announce Holly Ryan as the recipient of the prestigious 2024 Red Shoe Award. Holly's unwavering commitment to service, leadership, and compassion has left an indelible mark on our community.

## A Legacy of Leadership

Holly Ryan's journey with CCS began in 2004, and since then, she has worn many hats within the organization. Her tenure as co-president during the challenging 2020 -2021 period, marked by pandemic-related disruptions, showcased her resilience and dedication. Despite the obstacles, Holly ensured that CCS continued its vital work, supporting children and families in need.



## Nurturing the Follow the Child Philosophy

As co-director of the Second Saturday program, Holly embodies the "Follow the Child" philosophy. She believes in empowering children, mothers, and grandmothers who participate in this initiative. Her determination and hard work were instrumental in reviving the program after a two-year hiatus caused by pandemic restrictions. Recognizing that not everyone can commit to ongoing programs, Holly initiated one-day projects, including her involvement with the Milwaukee Diaper Mission project.

## Building Bridges and Making a Difference

Holly's impact reaches far beyond CCS. She has forged meaningful relationships with organizations such as Hope Network and the 16th Street Community Center. She is a vice president for St. Bakhita Catholic Worker House; a residence for women who have been sex trafficked or abused. Working with Our Lady of Good Hope Parish, Holly is helping facilitate a program similar to our Second Saturday program at All Saints.



Additionally, she is involved in providing spiritual support at three facilities – Ozaukee County Jail, Milwaukee Women's Correctional Center and Milwaukee County Jail. Holly's heartwarming contribution to the layette program involves collecting yarn so the women at the Center can knit and crochet beautiful baby items, as well as items for Senior citizens. She distributes the baby items to our Layette program and takes the other items to various senior citizen facilities and to Community Projects for Seniors. Her efforts ensure that even the tiniest members of our community receive love and care.



## Humble Gratitude

Upon receiving the Red Shoe Award, Holly expressed her gratitude: "I am truly humbled by this recognition. Like everyone else in the Christ Child Society, I believe in action. At the banquet, I shared a quote by Edwin Markham: 'There is a destiny that makes us brothers (sisters). None goes his (her) way alone. All that we put into the lives of others comes back into our own.'"

Holly Ryan exemplifies the spirit of selflessness and compassion. Her tireless efforts remind us that "nothing is ever too much to do for a child." Congratulations, Holly, on this well-deserved honor!



## Honoring our Vision Screeners

Christ Child Society members Jean Phelan & Mary Stroebel recently were recognized by Prevent Blindness Wisconsin, the organization we work with to develop and perform our Vision Screening Program.



Jean and Mary (pictured with other vision screeners at the Spring Banquet) received the "Gae Lach Sight Saver Volunteer Award" at the 65th Annual Meeting at the Baird Conference Center on June 13.

Jean has volunteered for 15+ years, helping with the 18 parochial schools we serve and screening thousands of children for vision difficulties. As she always says, "Vision is the cornerstone of literacy."

Equally important, Mary has been the administrative helper, scheduling the schools and volunteers. The initiative was started by longtime CCS member Betsy Haushalter.



*Jean's husband & family members attended the event in downtown Milwaukee.*



*The award was named for former Prevent Blindness president Gae Chatten Lach.*

**How you can help:** We can always use more screeners. If you are interested in screening, please text or call Jean at (262)853-7020. She can give you the contact number at Prevent Blindness for Vision Screening Training. To be with the children in the classroom, you must have taken the archdiocesan Safe Environment training.

## Resale Shop & Boutique: Successful Year!

Summer is arriving and the Resale Shop is stocked with new merchandise in all departments!

Our fiscal year ended on May 31, and we are happy to report that the Resale Shop an increase in sales of more than \$3,000 compared to this time last year, with a total of over \$42,000 in sales for the year, including eBay.

The directors would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank all of the room chairpersons, cashiers, wrappers and baggers - and everyone who assists us in so many ways.

We could not be successful without the CCS members who donate clothing, housewares, furniture and accent pieces to the Resale Shop - and who recommend us to their family and friends.

The shop continues through the summer with a break for July 4<sup>th</sup>. Our annual Summer Sale begins on Tuesday, July 23, starting with 50% off, then 75% off, and ending with a \$5 bag sale. Watch Facebook for bargains!



**Directors:** Cathy Smaglik, Jane Frisch, Pat Dorr, Mary Cuisinier, Mary Johnson, Janice Miller

### Room Chairpersons:

- **Housewares/Furniture:** Joanne Foran, Sheila Grandelis
- **Assistants:** Pat Driscoll, Ellen Kloth, Kathy Janiszewski
- **Linens:** Jane Vosters
- **Boutique:** Mary Ann Dodulik, Maria Strehlow
- **Classy Closet:** Judy Gehl
- **Jewelry:** Mary Cuisinier
- **Children's:** Marilyn Martin, Marge Tackes
- **Men's:** Patrice Sisulak
- **Sorters and Display:** Judy Schmid, Jean Frontczak, Meghan Kerner, Judy Fuller, Amy Loebel, Lisa Sullivan
- **Lower Level/Variety Room:** Nancy Janik
- **Greeting Cards:** Ellie Swentkowski, Nora Thoresen
- **Christmas:** Angie Kopf





## My Stuff Bags: Keeping toddlers warm, too!

My Stuff Bags is having another successful year. Since January 2024 we have assembled and delivered 603 bags to six shelters/foster care agencies. We do this with approximately 20 dedicated volunteers who come each and every month to help. Our new provisionals are enjoying their involvement in My Stuff Bags and are building new friendships along the way.

The Shelters/agencies include Meta House, New Horizon, The Cathedral Center, Milwaukee Women's Center, Children's Services and Joy House. The mothers and children are grateful for the bags they receive.

### Toddler Bags

In April we introduced Toddler Bags to the My Stuff Bags program. Patti Kurth and Anne Kelly stepped forward to Co-Chair this addition to our program. The items included in the toddler bags is very different than the bags we assemble for the children ages 2 through 18. The toddler bags are for boys and girls ages 9, 12 and 18 months. The items included in the toddler bags include 2 sleep and plays, 2 onesies, 1 sleep sack, 1 hooded bath towel, 2 washcloths, 2 socks and booties, shampoo, body wash, a sippy cup and most important a board book.

The Spring Mass Offertory donations on May 9 benefitted My Stuff bags. Thank you to all the members who contributed. We are grateful for the pajamas, shirts, stuffed animals and combs as well as cash and gift cards to Target, Walmart and Kohl's. The shoppers will be purchasing many needed items for the months to come.

### Toiletry Requests

New Horizon is requesting toiletries, including full size bottles of shampoo, deodorant, soap and lotion. These items go to children in foster care. They are so thankful for your continued support. Donations can be brought to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the resale shop. My Stuff Bags is off for the month of July and will resume the first Thursday in August, on the 1<sup>st</sup>. If you haven't experienced My Stuff Bags program, please join us for a memorable experience!



*Kathy Lau and Pat Lye, Co-Chairs of My Stuff Bags program*



*Patti Kurth & Anne Kelly showcase the new Toddler Bags*



## Second Saturday Celebrates Spring

### March

Our Second Saturday event was BEE-utiful as a large group of moms and kids joined us to hear from Charlie Koenen, the BEE Vangelist. He offered a fun and educational presentation about the importance of bees in our ecosystem. We also all got to taste honey from the different seasons. The children created their own bees to take home.

Thanks to DSHA students and two young men from St. Joe's Parish in Wauwatosa who helped make the moms and kids feel welcomed. Everyone enjoyed our lunch of sloppy joes, potatoes and veggies & dip.



### April



The April 13 event celebrated Earth Day by decorating trees, with each mom given a frame for their creations. The 22 mothers included three “graduate” moms whose children have outgrown our program.

### Backpack Giveaway!

Watch your Monday Messenger for information about distributing backpacks to our Second Saturday families.

**August 10 at All Saints.**

### May

Our Mother's Day celebration at Second Saturday was very special and lots of fun! One mom, surprised us with a bouquet of fragrant, deep purple lilacs from her garden. She shared that she was able to purchase her first home about two years ago and wanted to share the flowers with us. The moms created their own canvas bouquets by using inflated plastic bags to paint flowers and add their own personal touches. The children made cards for their Moms.

Everyone enjoyed a fantastic lunch with Mother's Day cakes for dessert. We held a drawing for several necklaces, and everyone received tickets from Brewer Buddies for a game at the end of the month.

Bath & Body Works of Menomonee Falls coordinates a district-wide collection for us, and the gift bags are given to our moms for Mother's Day. We are so grateful for their continued support.





## Literacy: Providing funds to help children read & reflect

The School Support and Literacy Committee funded four schools this year:

- **St. Joan Antida and Messmer High Schools:** Funds used for retreats
- **St. Coletta Day School:** Funds used for Chromebook laptops, OWL technology and food insecurity.
- **Blessed Savior South:** Purchased classroom supplies, playground equipment and a book vending machine plus more than 70 books. In addition, seven members who worked weekly with K 5 to 4th grade students at Blessed Savior South throughout the school year,

### Small libraries

We set up Little Free Libraries at four shelters - Meta House, Cathedral Center, Friendship House and the Milwaukee Women's Shelter. Guests can use and/or keep the books, and a committee member works as a liaison to make sure there are always books available. The liaisons are Angie Kopf and Linda Harrigan for Cathedral and Friendship House; Maureen Ullrich and Cathy Fagan for MKE Women's Shelter and Punky Kennedy for Meta House.

## Remembering Carol Knott

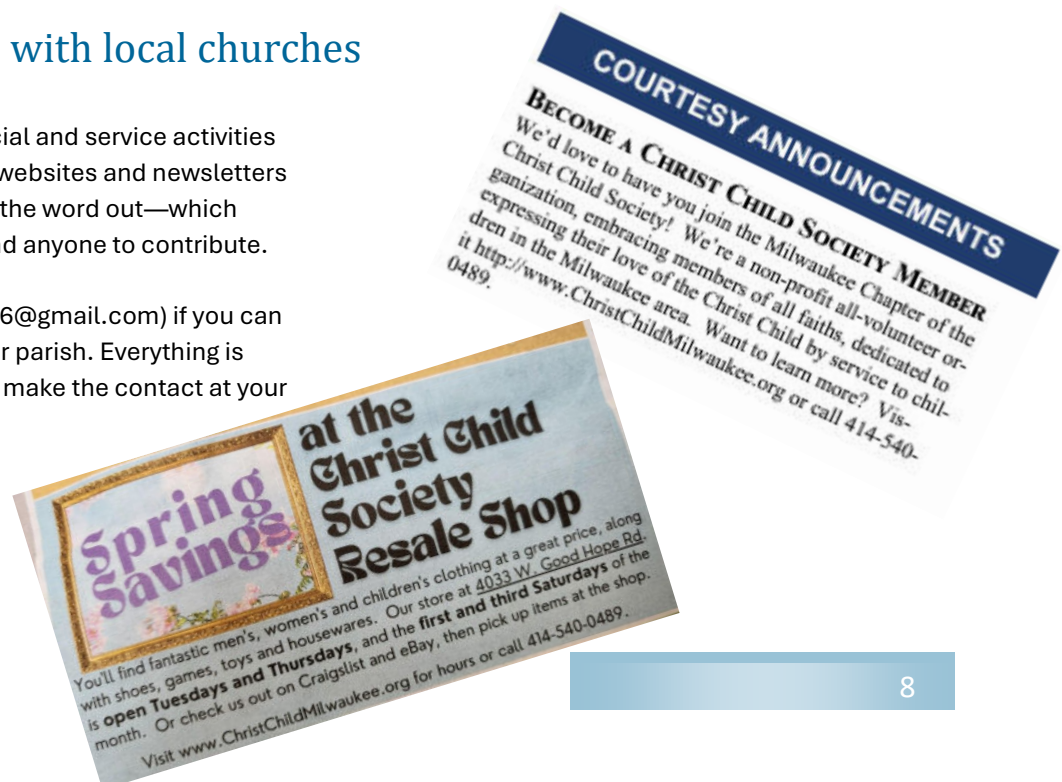
Thanks to the generosity of the family and friends of Carol and John Knott who donated significant funds to the Christ Child Society in memory of Carol Knott, we are helping more children who need our help in the shelters we serve. John requested this be used for the new toddler program. Carol's legacy as a nurse and volunteer in many charitable organizations – showing love, kindness and compassion to children – will live on.



## Spreading the word with local churches

Showcasing our spiritual, social and service activities in member church bulletins, websites and newsletters is one of the best ways to get the word out—which encourages women to join and anyone to contribute.

Contact Barb Haig (barbh1836@gmail.com) if you can help share information at your parish. Everything is written—all you need to do is make the contact at your church office.





## Layettes: Meeting a timely need

During the past year, the Christ Child Society provided 1,683 layettes to eight Milwaukee area hospitals and social service agencies. More than 60 members volunteered with the assembly, along with many more who knit and sew items. We would like to highlight four of our amazing volunteers.

- Everything starts with **Nancy Hyndman**, who emails the hospitals and agency locations to find out how many layettes they need for the next month. The social workers let Nancy know how many boys, girls, Spanish and English layettes are needed. Nancy lets the chairpersons know how many layettes need to be assembled and delivered.
- Nancy's updates are given to **Patty Boettcher** and **Geri Schmitz**. Patty counts out and marks all of the bags with the name of the hospital and Spanish if it is for a Spanish-speaking mother.
- Geri also receives the counts for the month since she orders the books and assembles the information packets. She orders the "Calm Your Baby" and "Read To Your Baby" brochures and prints flyers for the Resale Shop to put in each layette.
- **Barbara Lauby** keeps the inventory current so that we have all of the items for each month's assembly. Since we average 150 layettes each month, Barbara shops around to get the best possible prices and quality. Barbara is a pro at it — for instance, when the baby bottle vendor can't deliver, she searches for another source.

These women and many more help make the assembly run smoothly. If you have any questions about layettes, please call Jean Phelan 262-853-7020 or Pat Dorr 262-377-5284.

## Second Saturday Reunion!

In March, we had a wonderful reunion, when one of our moms, Juanita, brought her son Andres to visit. He's 17 now, and was one of our first participants when we started the Second Saturday program in 2006!

Juanita continues to attend when she can, with other moms and children.



## Advisory Board member stepping down

We would like to express our appreciation to Christ Child Society—Milwaukee Chapter Advisory Board member Ray Schneider, who served two 3-year terms on the Board. We are very grateful for his advice in the business of running of a nonprofit organization.



## Father Michael: Glory beyond all comparison

Change is the only thing we can really count on! I have enjoyed my time as your spiritual advisor, but it now has to come to an end.

As I move to Sheboygan Falls and Kohler to take care of two parishes, I have to exchange all the people I have gotten to know at Christ King, St. Bernard's and all the other places I've been able to help out at and be a part of, like the Christ Child, for people I have not yet met! This process carries with it a very reasonable difficulty, but it has brought me several good reflections that I would like to share.

We read this from Paul's letter to the Corinthians on the 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time this year, *"For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal."*

This momentary affliction Paul speaks of is about our "Outer selves" passing away. Along with it are many other circumstances or things that pass away, or change. This change does indeed levy us with a variety of afflictions, whether it's moving, aging, changing habits, or being separated from loved ones through death.

All these changes effect so much, but they leave behind something even greater. Every good thing we encounter, every person we know, every time we serve, every time we love creates something eternal. Even when the temporary good things pass away we always have what is left. The "unseen" which is

that  
"eternal  
weight of  
glory be-  
yond all  
compari-  
son"!

Even  
though I  
have to  
leave two  
parish communities, the good that has been  
done, the relationships I have formed and all I  
have been able to share will not be kept in a  
passing ledger of this world, but in God's  
eternal ledger in heaven.

All things that change pull us into an appreciation of the God that never changes. Amidst the world where changes bring struggle and difficulty we can long for God's great promise in our reunification in the kingdom of Heaven! While it does not lessen the sting of good-byes, Paul's reminder to the Corinthians and us is to remember the greater unchanging reality which is unseen, but certainly present!

The eternal glory of heaven will reunite those that are separated, and the love which we share is never lost, but held in store for us when we finally arrive at our heavenly home!

Thank you so much for your time with me as your spiritual advisor, know of my prayers for you as you continue the good work God has called you to! May you be rewarded eternally for all the service and love you give to the children of this passing world!





## Volunteer

### My Stuff

**3315 N. 124th St.**

9 a.m.

1st Thursday of the month  
Except July

### Layettes

**3315 N. 124th St.**

10 a.m.

3rd Monday of the month  
Except February

### Resale Shop

**4033 W. Good Hope Rd**

Tuesdays & Thursdays

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

1st & 3rd Saturday

9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

## Anniversaries

### 10 years

- Barbara Lauby
- Susan Niederjohn
- Carol Noble
- Mary Lou Piltz
- Ursula Raad
- Marilyn Schneider

### 20 years

- Constance Maloney
- Kathleen Noel
- Holly Ryan
- Patrice Sisulak

### 30 years

- Jane Frisch
- Jean Phelan

### 40 years

- Mary Cary
- Gail Chimenti

## Memorials

### Living

- Lea Doucette
- Connie Schwab
- Ellen Kloth

### Deceased

- Tom Barbera
- Chuck Bartels
- Cora L. Janus
- Clarice Lee Hawes
- Carol Knott

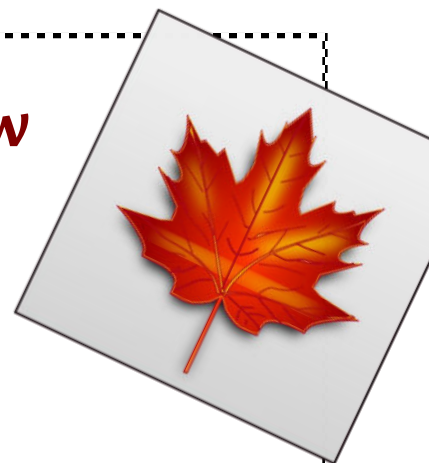
- Marion K. Nelson
- Edward O'Connor
- Robert Soerens
- Rosemarie Weber
- Walter Wong
- Lorraine Woznick

*Please send memorial requests  
to Eileen Jarosz - N26W22350  
Birchwood Ct. Waukesha WI  
53186.*

# Fabulous Fall Fashion Show

## Wednesday

## September 25, 2024



- ♦ The autumn fundraising event will feature fashions from our own Resale Shop, and showcase our members as models!
- ♦ Bring your friends, relatives, neighbors and anyone who wants a good time with lunch and holiday shopping. Details to come!



**CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY  
OF MILWAUKEE**  
WHERE LOVE LEADS TO ACTION

#### OUR MISSION

To foster a personal love of Christ  
expressing itself in service for needy  
children regardless of race, color or creed.

## Keep Engaged in Social Media

### Facebook

[CCSMilwaukee](https://www.facebook.com/CCSMilwaukee)



### Instagram

[christchildsocietymke](https://www.instagram.com/christchildsocietymke)



### Website

[christchildmilwaukee.org](https://christchildmilwaukee.org)



**CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY  
OF MILWAUKEE**  
WHERE LOVE LEADS TO ACTION

HOME ABOUT PROGRAMS WAYS TO GIVE DONATE



### Christ Child Society of Milwaukee

Merrick Center at  
Our Lady of Good Hope  
4033 W Good Hope Rd  
Milwaukee, WI 53209

Return Service  
Requested

Phone: 414-540-0489  
E-mail:  
[ChristChildMilwaukee@  
gmail.com](mailto:ChristChildMilwaukee@gmail.com)

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE