



CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY[®] OF MILWAUKEE

WHERE LOVE LEADS TO ACTION

Fall 2024 Newsletter

From the Presidents

Our 2024–25 new year for the Milwaukee Chapter of the Christ Child Society started out with a flurry of activity with programs, volunteer engagements and service with a focus on children, as you'll see in this edition of our newsletter. Our members are going above and beyond to help area families succeed.

We had a tremendous response to our Fall Fashion Show & Luncheon in September. A huge thank you to Diane Hicks & Maria Strehlow for coordinating the event. You'll find pictures on Pages 2 and 3, along with details about the fun we had and the funds we raised.

Kathleen attended the National CCS Convention in Omaha, Neb. in September. What a wonderful city! It was packed with helpful information on fellow chapters' programs, how to maximize our strengths in our own programs and nonprofits dealing with a cashless society. We heard an update on the canonization process for Mary Virginia Merrick. And after our tour of Boy's Town, their committee met with our group regarding their pathway to canonization for Fr. Flannigan – the founder of Boy's Town.

The National CCS Office has declared November as our month of service. In keeping with our commitment to literacy throughout our programs, we are holding a children's book drive to support ALL our programs. Please see page 4 for more information on how to help.

Thanks for all you do!

*Judy Keenan
Kathleen Semrad*

Nothing is ever too much to do for a child



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Social Media

Fashion show raises funds and entertains friends

Nearly 200 CCS members, their families and friends gathered for a day filled with shopping, laughter, and socializing. The Holiday Shop was bustling with attendees hunting for great deals on holiday decor and gifts, with almost everyone leaving with a gold shopping bag in hand.

After shopping, everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch and an entertaining fashion show hosted by Joan Armbruster, who kept the crowd engaged with humor, quotes, and song. The models showed off some stunning pieces available in the CCS resale shop. The day was not only fun but also an important fundraiser for CCS programs, helping support the organization's mission of serving infants and children. Special thanks go to everyone who contributed to the success of the event, especially Co-Chairs Diane Hicks & Maria Strehlow, and to those who attended to show their support!



Resale Shop & Boutique: Fashion with a flair

The Resale Shop has been humming in recent weeks. Financially, our profits are running about \$3,000 over 2023-24, supplemented by the \$600 added to our tip jar this past year. One of our volunteers, Judy Schmid, suggested we put out a tip jar next to the cashier and it's generated an extra \$600. Thanks Judy for creatively boosting our bottom line.

Our Summer Sale concluded at the end of August, and September found our ladies changing over the shop for the fall season. Our volunteers have done a marvelous job! The racks are filled with fall and transitional clothing and Housewares, Linens, the Boutique and the Lower Level also reflect the season. Soon we'll begin putting out Christmas merchandise.

If you think you might like to join our merry group, we desperately need someone to help sort ladies clothing. If you'd like to see what sorting entails, just come in some Tuesday and we'll be happy to show you. Bring a friend. It's always more fun to work with someone else. If sorting doesn't appeal, other volunteers are always needed. Help is especially needed wrapping and in the lower level on Thursdays and the first and third Saturday. Remember, you can always sign up for a two-hour shift, if you're curious and want to give it a try. Call Pat Dorr for details.

Thanks in advance for your continued donations. We are always in need of clean, slightly used, good quality men's, women's, and children's clothing, housewares, small working appliances, linens, toys, games, puzzles and small pieces of furniture. If in doubt, call the shop to see if we can sell your donation. If you have furniture you're not sure about, send a picture to Joanne Foran at joanne@foran-family.com and she will get back to you.



Resale Fashions Featured on the Runway!

Along with preparing the shop for fall, a good deal of time was spent getting ready for the Fall Fashion Show, Luncheon and Holiday Shop. Many thanks to:

- Joanne Foran, Kathy Janiszewski, Angie Kopf, Maria Strehlow and Jane Vosters for helping with the holiday linens, decorations and boutique gifts
- Mary Cuisinier for the spectacular jewelry display
- Jean Frontczak and Judy Gehl who helped our models pick out and accessorize their outfits. Jean also wrote the clever descriptions read during the show.
- Our cashiers, Mary Nichol and Judie Hermann, our wrappers, Jean, Judy Gehl and Mary Johnson, and all the other ladies who helped our guests with their purchases.
- And then there were our models: Jen Koenig, Janice Miller, Ellen Kloth, Joanne Foran, Jen Rentmeester, Antonette LoCoco, Mary Johnson, Judy Gehl and Sandy Casper. Way to strut your stuff, ladies!

November 1-15 Children's New and Gently Used Book Drive

As part of the CCS National Month of Service, our Children's New and Gently Used Book Drive held November 1-15 will help support literacy across all the Christ Child Society of Milwaukee programs. We'll use New Books to support the Day of Reading at Blessed Savior School South, our Second Saturday program, Toddler My Stuff Bags and Layettes. We'll collect and distribute Gently Used Books to underserved schools, families at Second Saturday, our shelter libraries and other nonprofits serving children in need.

CCS Members – How You Can Help!!

1. **Ask your family, friends, and neighbors** to buy or donate K-8 Children's Books
2. **Donate New Books** through our CCS Book Drive Amazon Wish List. See below.
3. **Donate Gently Used Books** to one of our collection sites
4. **Make a monetary donation** by check payable to Christ Child Society, and mail to Merrick Center. Attn: CCS Book Drive. 4033 W Good Hope Rd . Milwaukee WI, 53209

Bring New and Gently Used Books to our Collection Sites

Locations with CCS Book Drive Bins Nov. 1-17 – see bulletins for bin locations

- Christ King - Wauwatosa
- St. Joseph - Wauwatosa
- Holy Apostles - New Berlin
- St. Luke - Brookfield
- St. John Vianney - Brookfield
- Rainbow Booksellers for Children (57th & Vliet - open Wednesdays & Saturdays)

Christ Child Society Center (3315 N 124th Street)

- Nov. 2 – 10 a.m. to noon
- Nov. 17 – 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

CCS Resale Store (4033 W Good Hope Rd)

- Tuesdays and Thursdays - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Saturday Nov. 2 and Nov. 16 - 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

QUESTIONS or Need Help with a Children's Book Donation?

Call, text or email our Children's Book Drive Chair, Jen Rentmeester at 414-550-1550 or jenrentmeester@gmail.com

Download our Amazon Wish List and order online!

- If you are looking at this newsletter online, just click on the link, or copy and paste it into your browser.
www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/2TYJ60ET254QC
- Or point your phone camera at this QR code and click on the link that comes up.
- New books ordered through our Amazon Wish List will be mailed directly to CCS. Please click the Christ Child Society c/o Jen Rentmeester mailing address in your Amazon checkout.



Empowering Compassion: Inviting Women to Make a Difference through Christ Child Society

How many times have we heard or read in the news about child neglect, child abuse, children struggling to exist in today's environment? How many times has this news been about children in our own community? How many times have we talked to our friends about this news and how many times have we heard the words "I wish there was something I could do to help."

Well, we are the "something" that can be done.

Every one of the members of this chapter is working to make a child's life better. Let me give you some numbers:

- Last year we distributed 1,683 layettes and gave over 1200 hours assembling them.
- My Stuff assembled 1,054 bags for 550 hours of assembly work.
- Second Saturday worked directly with 156 moms and 298 children and spent 243 hours of their time to encourage literacy and mental wellbeing in family units.
- School support and literacy works with select schools to provide necessary funding, teaching assistants and supplies to educate children and they donated 240 hours last year.
- Vision screening served 800 children in the past year with 206 hours donated to that cause.

Of course, these are just a small number of the hours that are donated to our projects by each of our members. Not mentioned are all the hours that it took to sew, knit, crochet, and even shop for all the supplies for layettes and My Stuff. There are hours not counted for delivery of the layettes and My Stuff, and now the toddler bag program as well.

Then there are countless hours of paperwork, emails, meetings, the Resale shop, programs, invitations, computer work, newsletters, mailings, and the list just goes on and on. Yet without all of this involvement by our members, there would be a great hole left in the lives of those we serve.

We do make a difference.

We laugh, smile and have a good time while doing all this work. There is a personal satisfaction, a good feeling deep inside, that we receive from helping others. It's good for our souls to "give back."

I would like each one of you to look at your friends, neighbors, daughters, nieces, and other women that you encounter and tell them about the Christ Child Society.

- Bring a friend to one of our project work days
- Invite them to attend a meeting with you and let them experience first hand what we are all about.
- Ask them to share in how good it feels to help others and give back to our community.

It is you that will keep this chapter growing and able to continue serving our community. Remember that we are the "something" that can, and is, being done to make this part of our world a little better for the children in it. We need to spread that word.

Contact me if you need help with membership materials to share with those who may be interested in joining our group. Thank you.

Ellen Johnson - finalneedl@aol.com or 262-674-1239



CCS Vision Screenings: Illuminating the Path to Literacy for Young Learners

Vision screening is the cornerstone of any literacy program. If a child has a vision problem and cannot see to read, that child will have a challenging time learning. Eleven Christ Child members are screening this fall at eight area schools.

September 20: St. Josaphat School – Screened 23 4 and 5 year olds.

September 24: St. Vincent Pallotti School – Screened 30 4- and 5-year-olds, along with 21 older students identified through parents or teachers.

September 30: St. Agnes School – Screened 72 3-5-year-olds and one other identified student.

October 1: St. Joseph School – Screened 32 3-5-year-olds.

We have more schools scheduled: Blessed Savior School, St. Catherine's School, Northwest Catholic School and Notre Dame School. Our main focus is on the 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds. They are the ones whose eyes change the most and need to be screened yearly.

Other volunteer groups through Prevent Blindness Wisconsin screen the students in grades one through eight unless there is an immediate problem, and we screen them when we are at the school. The teachers and principals are grateful for our work and welcome us into their classrooms.

Growing Gratitude

Our referrals for professional testing are up significantly over the Fall 2023, with some indication that children are glued to their devices and do not play outside like they did before COVID. Young children need to look at objects in the distance to develop the ability to be able to see far. Close-up vision suffers from extended periods of time on electronic devices.

It is rewarding to know that you can change children's lives by screening them and finding a vision problem in less than five minutes. Not only is it rewarding to work with the children, but it is also fun. Our members may not see the immediate impact they are having on children, but they can be satisfied knowing they have made a difference in their lives.

How you can help: We need more volunteers, as many of our members are screening multiple times. To become a certified vision screener is quite easy.

- Take the archdiocese class "Safeguarding All God's Children before you can go into the classroom. Call 414-769-3300 for details.
- Take the Prevent Blindness of Wisconsin training to learn how to screen. Call 414-765-0505 for details.

Questions? Contact Jean Phelan—262-853-7020



My Stuff Bags: Capturing Smiles and Support to Kids in Need



My Stuff bags are having an outstanding year – and we’re not even halfway through! Since the beginning of this fiscal year in June 2024, we have assembled and delivered 497 bags – almost 100 more than this time last year – and averaging 124 bags a month. We started our toddler program in April to include items for sizes 9, 12 and 18 months. We have delivered 36 toddler bags since June.

The need is real

The shelters we serve include Meta House, New Horizon, Cathedral Center, Milwaukee Women’s Center, Children’s Services and Joy House. Based on our shelter visits last fall, the shelters most in need of the toddler bags are Meta House, New Horizon, Cathedral Center and Milwaukee Women’s Center. The moms are extremely grateful for the new items for their children.

We assemble our bags on the first Thursday of every month (except July) at 9 a.m. at the Christ Child Center on 124th St. We are blessed with more than 20 dedicated volunteers every month to sort, clip and assemble the bags. The friendships we’ve developed make this group so very special. New members are finding they have many common interests with others and know they are making a difference in the children they serve. We are hopeful more provisionals will join us in our monthly assembly.

Reaching out to parishes

We receive so many beautiful in-kind donations, which help us to reach even more children. This year, we sent letters to five parishes that have generously donated to My Stuff Bags for their Advent giving collection in the past, and we are hopeful they will all continue their support of the Christ Child Society. They include St. Sebastian, St. Jude the Apostle, St. Monica, Lumen Christi, St. Mathias and St. Martin of Tours.

One more note: The New Horizon Center has moved to a new location at 2709 North 32nd street. We provide our bags to the children they place in foster care as well as needy children in their daycare center. They continue to ask for donations of full-size containers of shampoo, conditioner, body wash, lotion and soap. You can drop these items off at the resale shop on the second floor. You’ll see a sign on the door.

How you can help: Please join us to assemble these bags for children! We also have some volunteers who shop for new clothing and extras for the bags. We’re always looking for more. Contact Kathy Lau (414-630-2351 / kasaboo72@hotmail.com) and Pat Lye (414-588-1386 / psllye@icloud.com)

Second Saturday off to a great start!

September

Great to be back with our Second Saturday families! 18 families participated at our event at All Saints on September 15. We started with stretching and then introduced journaling. Each Mom received a journal and pen, and we hope to find a few minutes each time we gather to write and reflect. Then it was on to making magnets! Perfect for the fridge. We enjoyed delicious mostaccioli with salad & watermelon for lunch. The students from DSHA helped get the kids settled and ready for fun.



October

In honor of Spanish Heritage month, Salsabrosa Dance Company performed several dances, then had all of us participate in learning some of the moves for salsa and mambo. One of the dancers was a Divine Savior Holy Angels High School graduate and knew some of our volunteers. The kitchen provided a delicious taco lunch with corn & bean salad, along with nachos and salsa. Families took home apples, a muffin mix and plenty of memories.



Our next event is November 10. Contact Holly Ryan or Reine Assana for info!

Summer of Service: Students Transform Communities with Christ Child Society

Over the summer, five volunteers from the Catholic Heart Work Camp in southern Illinois and Michigan along with an adult chaperone provided assistance to the Christ Child Society and a couple of its partners.

The group spent one morning at the Resale Shop performing a variety of tasks. These included taking photos and logging information about Christmas items that will go on Craigslist in fall, reorganizing the library of paperback and hard cover books, putting merchandise on the sales floor, polishing silver, unloading donations, and removing tags and plastic fasteners from baby blankets for layettes.

They also spent two afternoons weeding and planting two flower beds at Blessed Savior South under the direction of our CCS Co-Presidents, Judy Keenan and Kathleen Semrad. What a lovely welcome this is for the school grounds! Additionally, the volunteers spent 1½ days organizing clothing donations and cleaning the attic at Meta House.

The students from Catholic Heart Work Camp were sponsored by St. Joseph Congregation in Wauwatosa. Sandy Schmitt, a parish member, served as our liaison. As you can see from the pictures, the group worked hard but also had fun in their service.



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. If you have any questions about layettes, please call Jean Phelan 262-853-7020 or Pat Dorr 262-377-5284.



Memorial Mass Schedule

December 7, 2024 (Saturday) The Wisconsin Club Milwaukee. 10:00 a.m. 900 West Wisconsin Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53233. Mass is part of our Christ Child Society Christmas Mass & Brunch event.

March 29, 2025 (Saturday) St. Mary's Visitation. 8:00 a.m. 1260 Church St. Elm Grove, WI 53122. Mass is part of our Christ Child Society Mini-Retreat to be held on the same campus in the Senior Center. Details to come.

May 8, 2025 (Thursday) Our Lady of Good Hope. 4:00 p.m. 7152 N. 41st St. Milwaukee WI 53209. This is the parish on the same campus as the Christ Child Society Re-Sale Shop. Mass is part of our Spring Mass & Dinner event.

St. Coletta Day School Newsletter

Our friends at St. Coletta recently mentioned the Christ Child Society's grant to the school, which enabled them to purchase a refrigerator and food for students in need.



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.

Memorials

Living

Margaret Zeches

Pat Dorr

Deceased

Lorraine Carli

Mary Clare Falsetti

Karen Finerty

Bob Fischer

Rita Freiesleben

Kenny Hamilton

Jack Kern

Emily Kosso

Maureen Manning

Mitzi McGovern

Thomas Mountin

John Paukratz

Fahed Raad

Frank Thomatz

Bev Washcovick

David C. Williams

Ann Worzala



Send memorial requests to

Eileen Jarosz

N26W22350 Birchwood Ct.

Waukesha WI 53186

Christmas Brunch

Saturday

December 7, 2024



- Bring your daughters, mothers, friends and neighbors
- Mass, with brunch to follow
- Entertainment: Elm Grove woman's Club Chorus
- Contact Christine Friar & Kathy Powers if you'd like to volunteer
- Reservation information coming soon!

Wisconsin Club

900 W. Wisconsin Ave.

Milwaukee, WI 53233



**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)



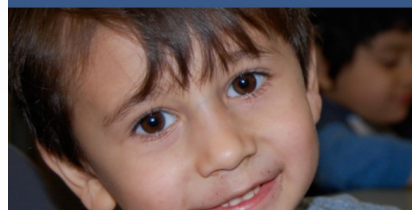
Website

christchildmilwaukee.org



**CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY
OF MILWAUKEE**
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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