

# Love Changing Lives.

Spring 2023 Newsletter

Your gift in action.



Barbara Edwards, Michelle Craig and Beth Hecox came to PCH's April 2023 Remembrance event to celebrate their friend, Susan Marlow.

## Remembering those who live in our hearts

On a table sits dozens of photos, some with hand-drawn messages, some with poems, all commemorating a life that ended at Porta Caeli House (PCH). Twice each year, PCH holds a Celebration of Life and Remembrance, welcoming friends and family of former guests to share prayer, music and stories of their loved ones. The emotional event helps bring closure not only to those friends and family who attend, but also to the staff of PCH who cared for them in their final days.

*"I felt comfortable leaving at night because I knew Susan was in the best possible hands."*

- Barbara Edwards

"Gate of heaven" could not be a more appropriate meaning for a place that has been a final home for the almost 1,500 people since its opening in January of 2017. Porta Caeli House is a peaceful setting that provides a home to those under hospice care, welcoming spaces for families to be with their loved ones, meals in a shared dining room, and a caring staff who serve as family to many who have no one else to be with them in this time. There is no charge for care.



"Some of our guests choose PCH because of homelessness," says Director Sharisa McDaniel. "Some come here because they have no family, and others because their family can't care for them."

Barbara Edwards, Michelle Craig and Beth Hecox came to the April 2023 Remembrance event to celebrate their friend, Susan Marlow. Susan was a 48-year-old Tulsa resident who had been battling cancer and kidney disease when she was referred to PCH by Saint Francis Hospital. Her friend of 24 years, Barbara, was with her every step of the way.

"Susan didn't want to die in her apartment and she didn't want to die in the hospital. PCH was the most beautiful outcome they could have wished for," said Edwards. "She loved every minute of being at Porta Caeli House. The staff was always loving her, hugging her, making sure she was in a fresh nightgown daily. I felt comfortable leaving at night because I knew Susan was in the best possible hands."

Before she died, Susan told her friends she wanted the picture of her in the red dress to be framed and displayed at the celebration of her life. Her wish came true on April 1, 2023.

*Porta Caeli House is a family, not a facility. For more information on how to donate, volunteer or join our staff, visit [portacaeli.org](http://portacaeli.org).*





# You showed up in a big way for Cooking Up Compassion 2023!

Catholic Charities held its 18th annual Cooking Up Compassion gala on February 3rd, hosted by event chairs Mandy and Blake Atkins.

*Save the date for next year!*

*Saturday  
2-10-24*



*"Mandy and I were honored to chair Cooking Up Compassion for the past two years. We are so thankful to our event patrons who donated to Catholic Charities in record-breaking fashion. We are happy to pass the torch to Matt and Teresa Gawey knowing they will be very successful as next year's chairs!" - Blake Atkins*

## WORK TOGETHER | MAKE A DIFFERENCE | BUILD YOUR TEAM

***"It was an honor and privilege to have our leadership team volunteer with CCEOK. What an incredible experience to team build while giving back to the communities that we live in and service. Thank you for the inspiring opportunity to serve others!"***

***- Jill Leach  
General Manager  
Walmart DC7015***

Catholic Charities has opened its doors to businesses wanting to give back to their community through Corporate Team Building. Businesses of any size are welcomed for a day of volunteering in The Market, kitchen, garden, or warehouse, and have the option to reflect and build on their service day with lunch and private meeting space.

In the past year, Catholic Charities has hosted more than 17 different businesses ranging in size from 5 to 50 members, taking a day to volunteer and give back.

Walmart Distribution Center 7015 worked with Group Volunteer Coordinator, Barbara Bird, to customize a two-day team building retreat to fit their schedule and needs. With 50 team members attending, Walmart DC7015 was able to make a huge impact serving our clients, and to bond and grow together as a team.

If you would like to bring your team to CCEOK, contact Barbara Bird at [bbird@cceok.org](mailto:bbird@cceok.org) for more information.



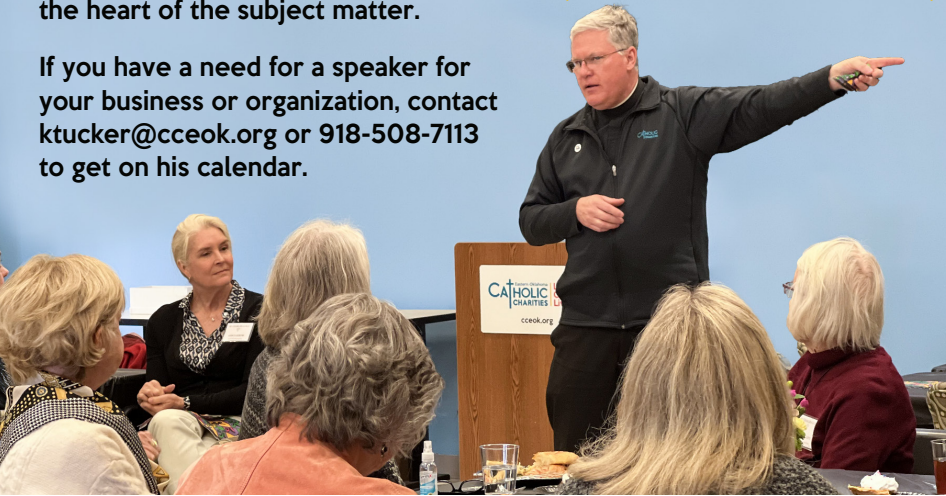


No matter the size group, Catholic Charities CEO Deacon Kevin Sartorius speaks both from experience and from the heart.

From the impact of Catholic Charities on the community to religious discussion, Deacon Kevin has a knack for drawing people in and getting to the heart of the subject matter.

If you have a need for a speaker for your business or organization, contact [ktucker@cceok.org](mailto:ktucker@cceok.org) or 918-508-7113 to get on his calendar.

Need a speaker at your next event? Ask Deacon Kevin!



## Celebrating a year of feeding the hungry at The Market

Since its grand opening a year ago, The Market at Catholic Charities has been bridging the gap of food insecurity for Eastern Oklahomans. The client-choice set up allows clients to shop for food with dignity and cuts down on food waste common with other distribution models.

**200,000 lbs.**

of food given to the hungry each month.

**3,441 households**

received food last month:

**38%** | children

**50%** | adults 18-64

**12%** | seniors

For more information on volunteer opportunities, visit [cceok.org/volunteer](http://cceok.org/volunteer) or email [volunteer@cceok.org](mailto:volunteer@cceok.org).

“Giving, whether it be time, talent, or treasure, has been a part of our lives since we’ve been married. We would like to see those gifts carried on in the years to come. We have included Catholic Charities in our estate plan because their work touches so many lives.”

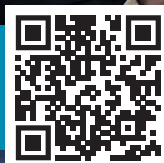
- Dcn. Dave & Christi Johnson



Through our partnership with Tulsa Community Foundation and The Advancement Group, and as a service for our donors and friends, Catholic Charities provides complimentary and confidential charitable estate planning services.

Visit [cceok.org/gift-planning](http://cceok.org/gift-planning) or contact Laurie Gero at 918-508-7116 or [lgero@cceok.org](mailto:lgero@cceok.org) for more information.

Have you included Catholic Charities in your estate plan? Let us know! We are planning an extra special event for members of our Caritas Christi Society and would love to send you an invitation.



Donations from individuals like you fuel our mission to be Christ's merciful love to those who suffer.

Many are surprised to learn that Catholic Charities does not receive funds from the Diocese of Tulsa's Faith & Works Annual Appeal.

You may donate using the enclosed envelope or by going to our website:

[cceok.org/donate](http://cceok.org/donate)



*Come with us...*

*...and bring hope to those in need.*

Every day, our neighbors come to Catholic Charities in search of hope. Because of generous people like you, we can live out God's call to serve those in need in Eastern Oklahoma. Take a look and see the impact of your gift.

So many are struggling in today's economy. Among those are the most vulnerable in our community: children, the elderly and the disabled. I hope you will come with us and be Christ's merciful love to those who suffer.

God bless you,

*Deacon Kevin M. Sauter*



**DONATE TO THE ANNUAL APPEAL**  
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