



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

NEWS

SECRETARIAT OF COMMUNICATIONS
AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Catholic Charities expands services with transition of select Diocese of Kalamazoo pastoral ministry offices

(June 29, 2021: KALAMAZOO, MI): Beginning July 1, 2021, several Diocese of Kalamazoo pastoral ministry outreach offices will join the Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo agency. The transition allows for an expansion of resources for Catholic Charities in the areas of immigration assistance, outreach to the Hispanic/Latino and migrant population, social services to the Benton Harbor community, as well as advocacy and programs related to pro-life and persons with disabilities issues.

"Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo has long-standing success in providing a beacon of hope to those in need throughout the nine counties of our Diocese" said Bishop Bradley.

"Aligning our like ministries in these crucial need areas provides us an even greater opportunity to further the mission of the Church."

Deacon Don Bouchard, DO, Executive Director of CCDOK and President of Holy Family Healthcare, notes the synergies in welcoming the new ministries will allow for greater optimization of available resources.

"We are excited to welcome these ministry offices to Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo," says, Deacon Bouchard. "These ministries were a natural fit to the outreach to our sisters and brothers in need throughout our Southwest Michigan community. We look forward to expanding our mission to be God's hands providing housing, health, and hope to His children."

Catholic Charities will welcome five new employees to its Gull Lake, Kalamazoo offices. The Catholic Community Center will retain its offices in Benton Harbor.

Diocese of Kalamazoo

The Catholic Diocese of Kalamazoo is the territory of Catholic churches and community led by Bishop Paul J. Bradley. The diocese, which celebrates its 50th Jubilee Anniversary, was founded on July 21, 1971, when the Second Vatican Council called for the creation of smaller dioceses so that bishops could be more available to the people they serve. Today the diocese encompasses 5,337 square miles of nine counties in southwest Michigan: Allegan, Barry, Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph and Branch and includes 59 parishes as well as 21 Catholic schools. www.diokzoo.org.

Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo was formed on June 11, 1975, from two Catholic agencies that had provided social services to people of Southwest Michigan. The agency began doing business as Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo in June 2012. One agency, St. Agnes Foundling Home, had operated uninterruptedly in Kalamazoo by the Sisters of St. Joseph since 1915. That agency served unmarried mothers and their children, families seeking adoptions and other children in need. It was affiliated with Borgess Medical Center, a major health care provider in the community. The other predecessor agency was Catholic Social Services, a family service agency. The Catholic Diocese of Lansing began Catholic Social Services in 1958 as a community service in Kalamazoo. Its mission was to service families under stress, especially those with marriage and child-parent problems.

Partially as a result of the recommendations of the Kalamazoo Community Planning Council, St. Agnes Foundling Home and Catholic Social Services, both United Way Agencies, merged to form Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo. It was believed an agency with a more comprehensive purpose could better serve the people of the area. The sponsorship that Catholic Social Services had with the Diocese of Kalamazoo (formed in 1971) was continued with the formation of the new agency. Today, Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo serves people of all faiths within nine counties of Southwest Michigan.