



The Center of Hope, Inc. is a homelessness prevention program and 100% of your contribution is used in direct service to the poor.



Easter The Gift of Love

by George Dinkel, Executive Director

God put us in this world to know, to love, and to serve Him. (CCC 1721) During our Lenten preparation we hear of how Peter denied Jesus three times. We also hear later in the Gospel of Jesus asking Peter three times if he loved Him. (John 21:15-17) Perhaps Jesus was asking Peter to love Him in His people, the body of Christ, especially the poor and needy. Jesus asks Peter if He loves (agape) Him which is an all-encompassing love, a love of God, a love for the common good. Peter's response all three times is that he does love (filial) Him which is more of a personal love, a friendship

love, a love of a comrade. Peter's response reflects his personal love for Jesus who he has come to know and to love. It is important to note that after each of Peter's responses Jesus asks Peter to feed His flock. Jesus may be asking Peter to love Him not only individually, but in all of His people which makes up the body of Christ.

This reminds me of the scripture passage where Jesus is questioned about which is the greatest commandment. His response is to love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves. If we truly desire to be disciples of Jesus, we are also called to care for His flock,

to serve our neighbors.

It may be easier to love God than our neighbor at times, but we are called to both and really can't have one without the other. This may be difficult for us in our human nature, but through the gift of baptism, we are created as a new being, a spiritual being which gives us the gift to love as God loves, an unconditional love, an agape love which reaches to our neighbors. This is really what social justice is all about. There is a strong link between love of neighbor and social justice.

I have to continually guard myself not to become too service-centered. It is easy to become totally focused on the service we provide due to the significant number of families we see and our tight schedule. At times it is easy to become so busy providing service like Martha that the opportunity is missed to stop and listen to Jesus, as Mary did. Service is not bad, it is very important, but this is only part of the equation. We really do need to also come to know and love

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Center of Hope Annual Benefit Dinner "Home is where The Heart is"

The Center of Hope will be hosting its 2015 Annual Benefit Dinner, "Home is where the Heart is," on Sunday, April 19, 2015 at Newman University in the Dugan Library & Conference Center. The doors will open at 5:00 p.m. for a Private VIP Reception for sponsored tables, with all attendees being welcome for the Wine and Beer Reception beginning at 5:30 p.m. This year's theme, which was a hit song for Elvis, Firehouse and Lady Antebellum, will hopefully be a big hit for the Center of Hope as well, as it honors and celebrates its shared commitment to the Adorers of the Blood of Christ mission to serve the poor and marginalized in society by

preventing homelessness for so many families each year throughout Wichita.

The dinner will conclude with our "apostolic" auctioneer offering fun and exciting live auction gifts including a hand-crafted baby cradle, sports packages, a hunting excursion, jewelry, travel, a private tour of the White House and more. Treasure Chest keys will be available again this year for access to our mystery prize valued in excess of \$1,000. You will not want to miss this year's benefit!

Please register early as space is limited and reservations are required. You can register now by calling 316-267-3999 or mailing your registration to: Center of Hope, 400 N Emporia, Wichita, Kansas 67202. Tickets are \$75 each, or you can become a VIP Table Sponsor for 8 at \$700. A copy of the dinner invitation can be downloaded from our website: www.centerofhopeinc.org.



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CENTER OF HOPE, INC.
sponsored by the
Adorers of the Blood of Christ

Executive Director
George Dinkel

Staff:
Sr. Becky Balthazor, ASC
Marsha Flora
Sr. Deborah Schovanec, ASC
Chloe Weiss

Volunteers: ASC Associates

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Mary Benefield
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Jesus, especially in the poor who come to us in need.

This is where our volunteers become such an integral and important component of our service to the poor. They meet with each of those seeking assistance and have the time to listen to their stories, to be a friend to them, to show them compassion and respect. I believe all of our volunteers are a special gift from God and have been given special graces, as they show such kindness and concern to these families.

Please pray that we continue our little ministry of serving the poor and coming to know and love them so that we never have to hear these words from Jesus: "I never knew you" (Matt 7:23)

We wish the best for you and your family this Easter Season. May we all come to know and love Jesus more deeply in those in need we see each day. May God's blessings and peace be with you always. Thank you for your unending generosity and prayerful support.

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Volunteers Needed for COH Office

Volunteers are the backbone of Center of Hope. Unfortunately, over the past several months we've lost many due to a variety of reasons, most notably illness and family obligations. We are now seeking replacements for these volunteers as well as people to help with the Project Dervse program now being administered by COH.

Volunteers answer the phone and explain the program to potential clients, serve as greeters, do in-take (checking documents and organizing information required to receive assistance), in-put information into the computer system, check need for assistance with landlords and utility companies and perform other office work.

The COH office is open, except on holidays, Monday through Friday. Volunteers work on one of those days, usually 9:00 a.m. - Noon or 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Orientation is provided for new volunteers. No special skills are needed; just a real desire to help the less fortunate.

Many volunteers say that their work at COH helps them see the real needs in our community and they are part of easing those difficulties. Some days can be hectic, but there is a feeling of accomplishment in knowing that they are doing something for others.

To volunteer go to our web site at www.centerofhopeinc.org Volunteer, click on Volunteer and use the pull-down menu to access a Volunteer Application Form.

Fundraising Events Benefit COH

The Damm Music Center hosted the 4th Annual Christmas Concert at Gracepoint Church for the benefit of the Center of Hope on December 19, 2014. The concert was free and was well attended by many families who came to enjoy the outstanding music which was performed by the instructors, students and employees of Damm Music Company. The music and showmanship were excellent and provided a wide range of Christmas songs set to a Rock beat. A free will offering was provided which resulted in \$2,274 of donations to provide rent and utility assistance to the many families we serve. We are very grateful for Damm Music and Gracepoint Church for hosting this concert.

Damm Pharmacy recently ran a promotion among several doctor clinics in which they contributed a portion of the proceeds they received in filling prescriptions for these clinics throughout the month to the Center of Hope. We are very grateful for the contribution of \$3,500 from this event sponsored by Damm Pharmacy.

There are Angels Among Us...



(left to right) are members of The Bachelorettes Social Club: Dominique Garrett, Latasha Taylor, Misti Moore, Rachel Mason, Albania Loggins, Jayla Coleman, Shannon Walker, and Fantasy Thomas.

Sr. Deborah Schovanec, ASC, the COH Volunteer Coordinator, extends sincere thanks to The Bachelorettes Social Club for their unexpected and joyful work at the Center of Hope office. Sister tells us that on March 7, "We had a group of women here who just called one day and said they did volunteer work and would like to help us out. When Jayla (the organization's coordinator) called I told her that a great need was cleaning. Wow....did they clean!"

"When they arrived at 10:00 a.m., I first told them about COH, gave them a little tour so they'd know what they'd be covering, went through a prepared list I had made, and when I finished, they were off and cleaned everything in the next two hours. There was a hum of the vacuum cleaner the whole time, as every corner in every room was cleaned, along with periodic singing!!! They were delightful and their help so appreciated!"

Farmer Family Lives the Mission of COH

Long before the Center of Hope was established, Paul and Wanda Farmer were concerned about the poor and marginalized. They were very generous to churches and other organizations that provided community assistance. But they didn't confine themselves to the background by just offering financial support. Their son, Paul, remembers that as a child Wanda would entertain people for dinner who just looked like they needed help and she'd figure out a way to get them that help. This wasn't occasionally but most evenings.

Wanda and Paul, Sr. were Associates of the Adorers and at one meeting back in the early 1980s, the concept of St. Anthony House (the original name of the COH ministry) was presented. They immediately offered their support. Unhappily, Paul passed away in the early years of the existence of COH but Wanda not only continued supporting the ministry but expanded her efforts to help. It is as she freely admits her "passion."

Sr. Stella and Wanda were good friends and there are probably many areas in which Wanda assisted with the work of helping the poor that no one will ever know. If Sr. Stella asked for something, Wanda provided it...whether it was free service for clients from her business, Roto-Rooter Plumbing Repair and Sewer/Drain Cleaning Service of Wichita, or a computer and the help of son Paul, who is a computer whiz, for tech support. Wanda also paid for inter-

The Farmer Family support of COH is inspired by its matriarch, Wanda, who leads by example.



net and phone service. Wanda has underwritten many benefit dinners and served many years on the Advisory Board and later the Board of Directors.

Not only did Wanda commit herself to Center of Hope, she also inspired her children to help. Paul, one of eight siblings, has perhaps been the most involved. The transition from pen and paper to computers was challenging and Paul got many phone calls with the exclamation, "Paul, I need help!" It was not unusual to get a pop-up from Sr. Stella saying, "I need you right now." In addition to on-going tech support, Paul designed the COH webpage and hosts it through his business.

The Farmer Family support of COH is inspired by its matriarch, Wanda, who leads by example. She was particularly pleased to discover that a grandchild's gift for her last Christmas was a donation to Center of Hope. It is Wanda's dream that her grandchildren's generation will take up the family "business" of supporting Center of Hope.

The commitment to Center of Hope from the Farmer Family includes the many years of work by Mary Ann Farmer, sister-in-law of Wanda, and daughter, Ann T. Rider, attorney. For 14 years, Mary Ann volunteered in the office by answering the phone, doing in-take and other clerical work. Mary Ann once wrote in a Hopeline article that she felt: "It has always been an honor for me to be a part of this program and I am thankful for the opportunity to work with wonderful people ..."

Ann said that over those years of volunteering, Mary Ann would often talk about Center of Hope and what it meant to so many people. Mary Ann felt that through this ministry people were really being given hope.

When Sr. Stella asked Ann to be on the Advisory Board in 1998, she readily accepted that invitation knowing that it was an organization she already believed in and would support. As the structure of the agency changed, Ann transitioned to the Board of Directors. Her experience with fund raising for the American Cancer Society and her chairing of the annual Cattleman's Ball for that organization made her an excellent addition to the volunteer base. Through several terms on the board, Ann chaired the annual benefit dinner and auction. While no longer serving on the Board of Directors, Ann is still available to George and Sr. Becky as a consultant or resource regarding some legal issues of clients.



My Center of Hope Experience

Brandi Washington, client

I was desperate for help. Waiting on disability to approve me was treacherous. My landlord had been hounding me so I went to apply for rent assistance at Center of Hope. Just when I thought there was no hope, there was hope. The kind man that helped me assured me that I would get the assistance I needed and sure enough, I did.

A struggle-filled year passed and I was still waiting on my disability approval, when the landlord threatened to evict me, and once again I called Center of Hope. Not knowing if they could help me a second time I decided to give it a try, and they did help me!

For most of my life I had been a chronic relapsing alcoholic and crack addict. Once, when I had relapsed and was attending outpatient treatment, I found out about Center of Hope's Traffic Fine Program. The lady who referred me to the

program said only the serious get referrals to this program and she believed I was serious. Believe me, I was serious. I really wanted to get my life together.

So I interviewed with a kind lady named Sister Becky. She accepted me into the program and I did complete the program. It was so awesome! It really helped me a lot. I feel I really grew during that time. The program gave me self esteem that I hadn't had before. Not to mention that I was able to do community service work to pay off my traffic fines!

After I completed the traffic fine program, I began case management with Sister Becky. My self esteem has grown even more and I have learned so much! I have been learning to save my money and learning to record my expenses and income. Also, I've been working on a relationships workbook.

Because of my experience with Center of Hope and its caring and compassionate people, I have truly grown so much. I am so grateful for this organization. When I finish my case management next year it will be sad to leave as I feel very connected here, everyone is so kind and caring. Thank you all who work so hard to keep Center of Hope up and running. You are all such blessings to me.

When Brandi came to COH she was fighting addictions to alcohol and crack. She is in recovery through a 12 Step program and doing well with handling problems and working productively. We thank Brandi for sharing her story with you.

Center of Hope, Inc.

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“Life is a gift that God gives to the universe and to humanity.” Acts of the Adorers’ 18th General Assembly

CENTER OF HOPE, INC. MISSION STATEMENT

The Center of Hope listens to the cries of the poor with compassion and love, and without judgment, seeing all who present themselves as Children of God. A loving presence to those in need and advocates for the powerless, we offer hope to families, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or gender, as they deal with life’s daily challenges. We help them with emergency financial support for rent and utilities, provide case management toward resolutions of on-going difficulties, and assure the dignity and self-respect of each individual.

VISION STATEMENT

Offering hope for tomorrow
through assistance today

CENTER OF HOPE, INC.

Celebrating 31 years of service to
the Wichita community

Editor, George Dinkel
Coordinator, Mary Jobe-Waddill

Because You Cared

For the past seven months, the Center of Hope prevented 1,713 families from having to experience homelessness. Included in those families were 4,696 persons. \$588,319 was dispersed for rent, utilities and emergency needs. Utility assistance for Project Deserve of \$62,254 was provided for 321 households.

In addition to the financial assistance paid to landlords and utility companies, families were given food and other personal care products from our storeroom, provided budgeting assistance, and counseled for special needs.

Many thanks go out to all the parishes, business, and individuals who brought blankets, canned and boxed food, paper products and personal and home cleaning products. Most recently Lewis Bacher, Lori Benge, Jim & Lois Daniels, Georgia Drews, Teresa Edwards, Joseph & Josephine Hallacy, Kyle Jacobs, Martin Mendoza, Amy Sawyer, Bill & Anne Uhler, ASC Associates, Auburn Golf Club, Knights of Columbus Council #3114 Clonmel, Magdalen Parish, St Cecilia Parish, St Francis of Assisi Parish, St Michael’s Orthodox Church, and St Peter Schulte Parish have blessed us with 559 bags of food and supplies.

Center of Hope Recognition Gifts

IN MEMORY OF

George Brent Bob Hutchison
Robert C. Bunt Mary Tres Kruse
Patrick Halloran Jane Means

IN HONOR OF

ASC Sisters
Center of Hope Staff, Board, Volunteers
& their families
Patti Edison
Wanda Farmer, in lieu of Christmas gifts
Msgr. John Gilsenan
Marian Girrens, birthday
Donna Harris
Mel & Joan Kahn, in lieu of Christmas gifts
Ella Mai McGuire
Harlo & Glennis Schmidt
Rev. Kenneth Van Haverbeke
Robert & Mary Waddill, in lieu of
Christmas gifts
Barry & Rex Williams, in lieu of
Christmas gifts