

CHARITY WORKS

SUPPORTING NEIGHBORS. TRANSFORMING LIVES.

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MEN RISING UP TO BE FATHERS

*"Train the young in the
way they should go;
even when old,
they will not
swerve from it."*

– PROVERBS 22:6



CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND SEASONS OF CHANGE



Those of us who are blessed to be parents constantly face challenges while raising a family — and the necessity to adjust our expectations, tactics and attitudes. As a father, I have found that this is one of the biggest opportunities for healthy growth. There may also be an “aggressive nostalgia” and a longing for a “better” time from the past that we may not have recognized before now.

When children first arrive, it can be overwhelming. Bottles to heat, diapers to change, getting chores done and paying bills can leave any couple battling for their sanity. Over time, as the family adjusts and new practices are put into place, these tasks can become easier. We become accustomed to the pace of life.

However, constant adjustments are required for these little people who have graced us with their presence. Children will progress from the “feed me and change me” phase to the “come play with me” phase to the “leave me alone” phase as they approach adulthood. Each of these periods of life can be challenging in their own respect as we attempt to meet the mysterious and complicated needs of our children.

There is also a bigger change afoot — that of how to adjust our own expectations to the new realities around us. A family friend, who had children older than ours, told us that “You never know when the last time for something is.” I found this comment both profound and haunting, but I have recognized it in my own life as a father. The question, “When will she sleep through the night and not come into our room?” is replaced with the recognition that she is now sleeping through the night. And despite my previous thoughts on this matter, I really do miss her coming into our room.

As much as we complain about doing the same things every day, we humans become accustomed to our routines. A clinical term for this is called habituation, where we don't respond as much to ongoing stimuli. At times, we may not even recognize that the stimuli is still there — such as growing accustomed to the ticking of a new clock on the wall. In a similar way, we become used to our lifestyle even as it is constantly changing and adjusting. We also recognize what happens when we are on vacation and our usual sleeping, eating and exercise habits don't happen.

Regardless of what season in life you and your family are in, I hope that you will find a way to embrace it and look for the blessings that are hidden in plain sight. As one activity replaces another, avoid as best you can the very human need to go back in time and relive things from the past — or you may miss what is in front of you. As the Andy Bernard character from “The Office” wistfully articulates, “I wish there was a way to know you're in the ‘good old days’ before you've actually left them.” ♥

Mark Sanders, MA
St. Raphael Counseling



ST. RAPHAEL
COUNSELING



St. Raphael Counseling is a comprehensive, community-based psychological service ministry. We offer counseling and mental health services to help restore and strengthen family and parish communities. We are focused on providing assistance to those in need, offering services for individuals, children, teens, couples and families.

PROUD FATHERS BECOME THE DADS THEY NEVER HAD

CATHOLIC CHARITIES SUPPORTS MEN IN RAISING FAMILIES



SHORTY'S STORY

Zeferino is a proud father with wife, Yenifer. The dad of three, who goes by "Shorty," took his 5-year-old son to T-ball practice and watched him take his first swing.

"I never had that," Shorty said about his own father who wasn't active in his life. "My son said, 'I'm going to be a champion like you.' I almost cried. It was awesome."

He found Catholic Charities' Marisol Health, which assisted Yenifer during her pregnancy and the challenges she experienced. Marisol Services provides women's healthcare and a network of social services to support women, men and their families.



Shorty and his family pose for a photo with Santa Claus. They are grateful for Catholic Charities' support for their growing family.

Shorty and other fathers experience a welcoming and affirming community that gives their families the support they need, including medical appointments for moms, food and baby supplies, parenting support groups and even Christmas gifts.

"Catholic Charities is always there for everything," said Shorty. "It's always welcoming there. Everyone knows who you are. It's not a random place ... It always felt welcoming and like part of the family."

When his wife became pregnant with their second child, he insisted they return to Marisol Health so they could access the same quality healthcare and social support.

Shorty said if they become pregnant again they also wish to return to Catholic Charities, and also plan to help others. ♥

SHARIEF'S STORY

"We're planning on donating things to give back," Sharief said.

Fulfilling his role as a new father is also deeply personal and motivating for Sharief who, with wife Karla, welcomed their son seven months ago.

Sharief, 28, loves to hear his infant son's little laughs. He wishes nothing more than to provide for him.

"I want to give him everything I didn't have," said Sharief who works for a shipping company. "My whole life I was scrounging for scraps, and I missed out on years of school. Now I'm a working father and I support and love my boy."

He experienced homelessness with his mother, who was unable to achieve stable housing. Eventually, he started a job and found a place to live. He reconnected with his father and later married Karla. Catholic Charities gave them abundant resources and support.

"They gave us lots of information, baby formula, and lots of encouragement and praise," Sharief said. "It was a warming feeling. It was welcoming feeling. Never would have thought we would have received that much support." ♥

MEN GATHER TO SUPPORT MARISOL HEALTH

The sold-out SonRise breakfast fundraiser for Marisol Services on June 16 was a successful event gathering men who raised more than \$60,000 to support Marisol Health's mission to care for women and families. The event began with a Mass on the rooftop of the Denver Athletic Club and continued in the ballroom with a breakfast, speakers and program.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: LENNY LARAIO



We ♥ our Volunteers

Thanks to thousands of dedicated volunteers each year, our team serves our neighbors in Northern Colorado with life-changing support as they work to improve their lives.

We would love to have you join us! Please check online for the many opportunities available that fit your schedule and interests.

Visit ccdenver.org/volunteer

NOT JUST A WOMAN'S CHOICE MEN CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE SUPPORTING MARISOL HEALTH

Lenny does the smallest tasks with joy to support Marisol Health. He believes more men should be involved in supporting pregnant women in crisis.

It was 12 years ago when Lenny, a veterinarian, said he had the chance to support his pregnant girlfriend, but they chose to abort the baby.

"It's still something that weighs on my heart and mind," Lenny reflected. "You're never going to forget that you consented to killing your child. I didn't stand up for what I should of. I was away from my faith for a long time, and I see now the pro-choice arguments dominated my life. That's what was in the mainstream media. (Then) I heard the actual truth. There is actually life in the womb."

Now he's compelled to be an advocate for life. He feels fulfilled by volunteering with others on the weekends and praying outside Planned Parenthood. He's also a member of the pro-life outreach at St. Thomas More Catholic Parish.

Lenny advocates for greater awareness and involvement by men in the hopes that more women will choose life. A man, too, needs help and someone to talk through the initial shock and fear of an unplanned pregnancy — support that Lenny said he wished he had.

"It's not just a woman's choice," he said. "If I had talked to someone it probably would have changed my mind. ...And she would have agreed. There's definitely better options." ♥

Read more stories at ccdenver.org/newsroom



MARISOL HEALTH HELPS THE WHOLE FAMILY

We offer an innovative model that provides individuals with a seamless range of services. We help women and families with unexpected pregnancies including holistic reproductive medical care, counseling, housing, early childhood education, diapers, food and additional support services.

COUPLE FINDS STABILITY, FAITH AND NEW BEGINNINGS AT SAMARITAN HOUSE FORT COLLINS

Jordan and Ashley came to Samaritan House Fort Collins in crisis last year. With their little daughter in hand, they begged staff to ensure she was safe while they overcame homelessness and addiction.

Staff immediately served them dinner and began helping them on their journey to stability. Nine months later the couple is sober and found an apartment, with Jordan working a full-time job. They also joined a local Christian church and got married in November 2021.

“What I can say about all this is the Lord was the first person who brought us to the Samaritan House,” Jordan shared.

Samaritan House Fort Collins is a part of Catholic Charities in Larimer County, offering shelter, food, clothing, extended case management, diapers and baby supplies, as well as senior services. The shelter is the only one in the county that serves women and families experiencing homelessness. The underlying approach is to treat each person with respect, explained Regional Director Joe Sarr.

“The reality is there’s nobody who comes in our door that isn’t precious to Jesus himself,” Sarr said. “And we try to treat them the way that we feel He would want us to treat them. This includes to do what Christ did and meet them right where they are.”

That was the help the couple needed to start their lives over again and provide a good home for their 2-year-old daughter.

“We’ve got a lot of great things going for us,” Ashley shared. “We now know who we are and right from wrong. Samaritan House in Fort Collins was definitely a stepping stone for us.”

They entered the shelter’s extended stay program and received extensive case management and support.

“We were held accountable for our sobriety, which helped with our daughter,” said Ashley “We have custody back of her. She’s back in the home. She’s loving it.” ♥

Read more stories at ccdenvr.org/newsroom



Jordan, Ashley and their daughter, Mayla

SHELTER SERVICES

The first building in the nation built specifically to serve people experiencing homelessness, Samaritan House has been a downtown Denver staple since 1986. Today, our focus is primarily on serving women, families and veterans who are experiencing homelessness and food insecurity.

Over the years, we’ve extended our shelter and support reach into Larimer County with Samaritan House Fort Collins, Weld County with Guadalupe Community Center and the Western Slope.

During the pandemic, we opened an additional location: Samaritan House Smith Road, as well as a fully-staffed motel option to allow for improved social distancing.

Our newest location, Samaritan House 48th, doubles our capacity to serve women, making us — by far — the leading provider in Colorado of shelter, food and support for women experiencing homelessness.



FACES of Hope



CATHOLIC CHARITIES WELCOMES MOM WITH OPEN ARMS

Tinasia was welcomed by the team at Samaritan House and found the help needed to rebuild her family. Homelessness was a blessing in disguise for the Colorado native. A series of challenges led her to the doors of Samaritan House where she received shelter and resources, along with material and emotional support. The pregnant mom of three credits the team at Catholic Charities with transforming her life and setting her on a new path. ♥



FAMILY IS SURPRISED WITH A WELCOMING GIFT



Nicholas and Andrea hoped to get some basic clothes for their daughter to wear at her new school. What they did not expect was the surprise of a giant unicorn that was stashed away at Catholic Charities' Marisol Services location waiting for the right family to come along. The giant stuffed unicorn was a sign of hope for the small family who emigrated from Venezuela. ♥



MEET MORE FACES OF HOPE

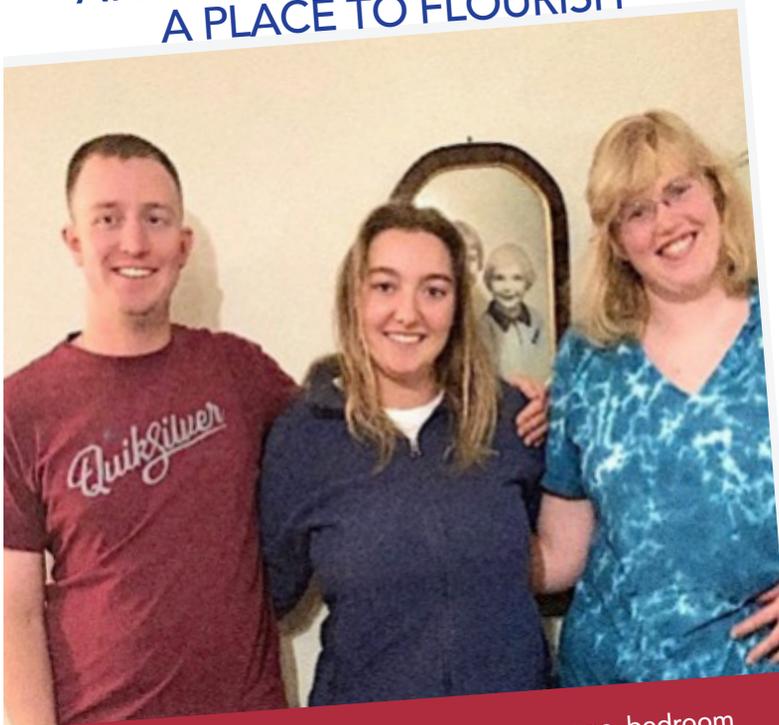
Hear the stories of people overcoming obstacles as they embark on a new path filled with dignity. Walk along with them as we partner to provide support, comfort and help at the most difficult moments in their lives. Go to ccdenver.org/facesofhope



NEW MOM FINDS STRENGTH AT MARISOL HOMES

Ever so delicately, Chardi snuggles her 10-day old baby's feet. With a smile, she said, "She gets the long toes from her daddy." Chardi came to Marisol Homes for help during her pregnancy. She needed housing and resources to start a new life with her daughter. She was excited to start the program and learned from prenatal and parenting classes. "Marisol Homes has helped me be a mother I've always wanted to be. I am so grateful." ♥

AT ARCHDIOCESAN HOUSING, A PLACE TO FLOURISH



Sarah, 23, found her perfect home — a one-bedroom apartment at Villa Sierra Madre I — a secure and remodeled complex in Silverthorne run by Archdiocesan Housing, a ministry of Catholic Charities. Beforehand, Sarah lived at a good apartment complex, but she needed a little extra help because of cognitive delays. Her parents couldn't be happier with their daughter's new independence. ♥





Catholic Charities reaches far and wide across Northern Colorado and does more than most people expect. Here's a quick look at some of the ways we're supporting neighbors and transforming lives.

WHAT'S NEW AROUND CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Samaritan House held an event for participants and staff in honor of Juneteenth, a federal holiday that commemorates the end of slavery in the U.S. Everyone enjoyed a barbecue lunch and ice cream, yard games, arts and crafts and a friendly visit by the Denver Police Department's mounted patrol unit.



Samaritan House Fort Collins has continued to see growth in the number of people who are using shelter services each night, especially families. In May, we sheltered 30 individuals in family units nightly, which is a 35% increase over the average.

Respect Life Denver, a ministry of Catholic Charities of Denver, is unveiling a new parish resource called "Footprints" to accompany women in crisis pregnancies, in addition to all other resources provided. If interested in being part of the Footprints effort, please go to respectlifedenver.org/footprints.



Marisol Homes is ready for summer. Vincentian volunteers came to prepare planters for the residents to start their own gardening club. The new fence that was installed earlier this year was stained and weeds were pulled, making it ready for the residents to enjoy.



Samaritan Cycling finished the six-day Ride the Rockies bicycle tour in June, trekking more than 430 miles. The cyclists dedicate their rides to raising funds for Samaritan House shelters.

Little Flower Assistance Center held a pizza party to celebrate dedicated volunteers. Many volunteers have served at our food bank and resource center for years and have formed lasting friendships.



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