



Living for Christ

ST·MICHAEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

A Ministry That Changes Lives

By Angie Norby, former Director of Client Services



While with a client who was pregnant with her third child, I questioned that it seemed like there was something on her mind. “My husband is becoming depressed. I don’t know how to make him feel better. This pregnancy has him worried about finances, he feels like he needs to get another job. This will make it so he’s not home and I’ll be parenting alone.”

I asked, “Can you tell me what exactly he feels will be a financial struggle for your family?”

She said, “Diapers, formula, furniture, all baby care items.”

I told her to consider where she is and what’s available at our center, then encouraged her to tell her husband that Options for Women | Cornerstone has them covered for at least the next two years! The relief and joy on her face was priceless!

When life brings us to a crossroad, where do we go? For the active believer, we go into prayer or call on our faith-filled brothers or sisters. But what about those who are uncertain about their faith life or have no desire to know God?

Add an unplanned pregnancy into the uncertainty. Pregnancy knows no denomination, financial status or ethnicity. Pregnancy happens in all walks of life.

At OFWC we believe in holistic care, the woman as a whole.

Our licensed Nurse Manager presents the client with her options, we withhold no information. This is her appointment. All of her questions about these options and the details are answered by a medical professional.

We do not perform or refer for abortion, but we talk about it.

Abortion is one of the most life-altering choices available to her. Abortion must be discussed. It’s a matter of life and death, a matter of her mental, physical and spiritual future. During this sensitive time while facing a sensitive matter, we gently encourage her to choose life.

Inside

- 3 Being Good Stewards of Our Personal Harvest
- 4 Jeanne and Rob Van Drasek: *Becoming Channels of Grace Through Stewardship*
- 6 Questions and Answers About Our Annual Stewardship Renewal
- 7 The Art of St. Michael: *The Rosary Windows*

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A Ministry That Changes Lives *continued from front cover*

We are one of many PRCs nationwide, serving women, men and families in an unplanned pregnancy situation.

We create a comfortable, warm, inviting atmosphere, without judgment or shame. Our doors are always open regardless of the decision.

It would be foolish to assume that she will carry her baby to full term, although that is our prayer. She may walk out of our doors and we'll never see her again. It is our servant's duty to bring her as close to hope and fearlessness of her circumstance as possible while she is here with us.

The services are 100-percent free of charge. We offer love, the love of Jesus at all times. STI testing, medical-grade pregnancy testing, limited obstetrical ultrasound, material assistance, parenting education, basic life skills education, Natural Family Planning classes. We assist our clients with MN Sure applications, providing referrals for housing/financial assistance programs. We partner with local maternity homes and post-abortive healing nonprofits. We offer referrals for addiction recovery/counseling, mental and physical abuse recovery.

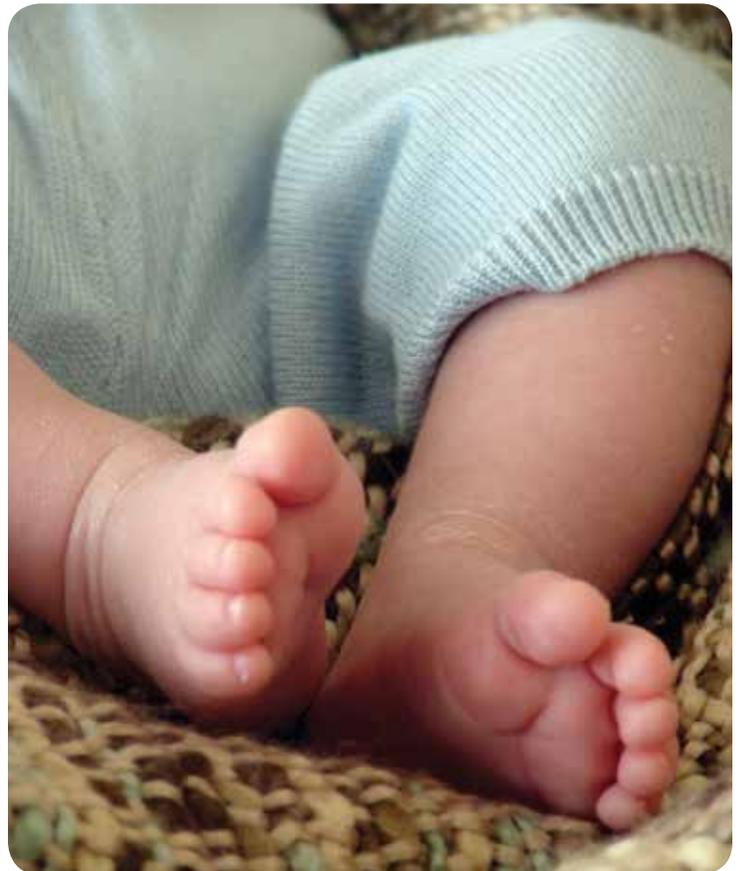
Although we are not licensed counselors, our medical staff are licensed and committed to protecting their credibility and the center's credibility. We are held to the same level of compliance through HIPAA as any other medical facility in the state.

We are completely donor funded.

We don't promote birth control. We believe that to serve her completely, we will not promote toxins for her body. We encourage holistic care and natural solutions, empowering her to know her body and to listen to it. We teach and encourage Natural Family Planning.

We believe that contraception is harmful and immoral. Among the side effects for the pill are: high blood pressure, blood clots, cancer risks, weight gain — just to name a few. Contraception can increase abortion rates within societies. In addition, contraception does not adequately protect from sexually transmitted infections.

Consider also that contraception cannot protect hearts from being broken by the lusts of promiscuity.



They say in their own form of language “God, you’re not in charge of this part of my life.”

We are pro-active in our desire to help others understand the dangers of contraceptives.

OFCW cares about the woman’s mind, body and soul. We are there to build her up when she thinks that she cannot succeed with her pregnancy. We want her to feel welcome and enjoy non-judgmental relationships in our center.

We provide new and like-new clothing, both maternity and non-maternity, self-care products, pampering gifts and more.

We provide formula, diapers, wipes, jar food, brand new and like-new clothing from newborn to 5T. Changing tables, bouncy seats, various toys, blankets — you think of it, we provide it.

continued on back cover

Living for Christ



A Letter From Our Pastor

Being Good Stewards of Our Personal Harvest

Dear Parishioners,

In the United States, October is the month that brings the completion of the harvest. Although many Americans live in urban areas and seldom ever see a farm, the foods we all eat — fruits and vegetables, meats, milk, and the grain for our bread — come from farms and ranches across America and around the world.

Some of us may feel completely detached from farm life and think that the harvest has little to do with us, but we are all connected with agriculture more closely than we realize. The success of the harvest affects the prices we pay — and if the harvest were to fail completely, there would soon be nothing available to put on our grocery shelves.

In the Old Testament world, most people were farmers, and the Israelites were to bring offerings to God from the harvest of their fields and flocks. The success of the harvest directly affected their wellbeing during the next year. At their agricultural festivals, “the measure of your own voluntary offering which you will give shall be in proportion to the blessing the Lord, your God, has given you” (Dt 16:10) they were told.

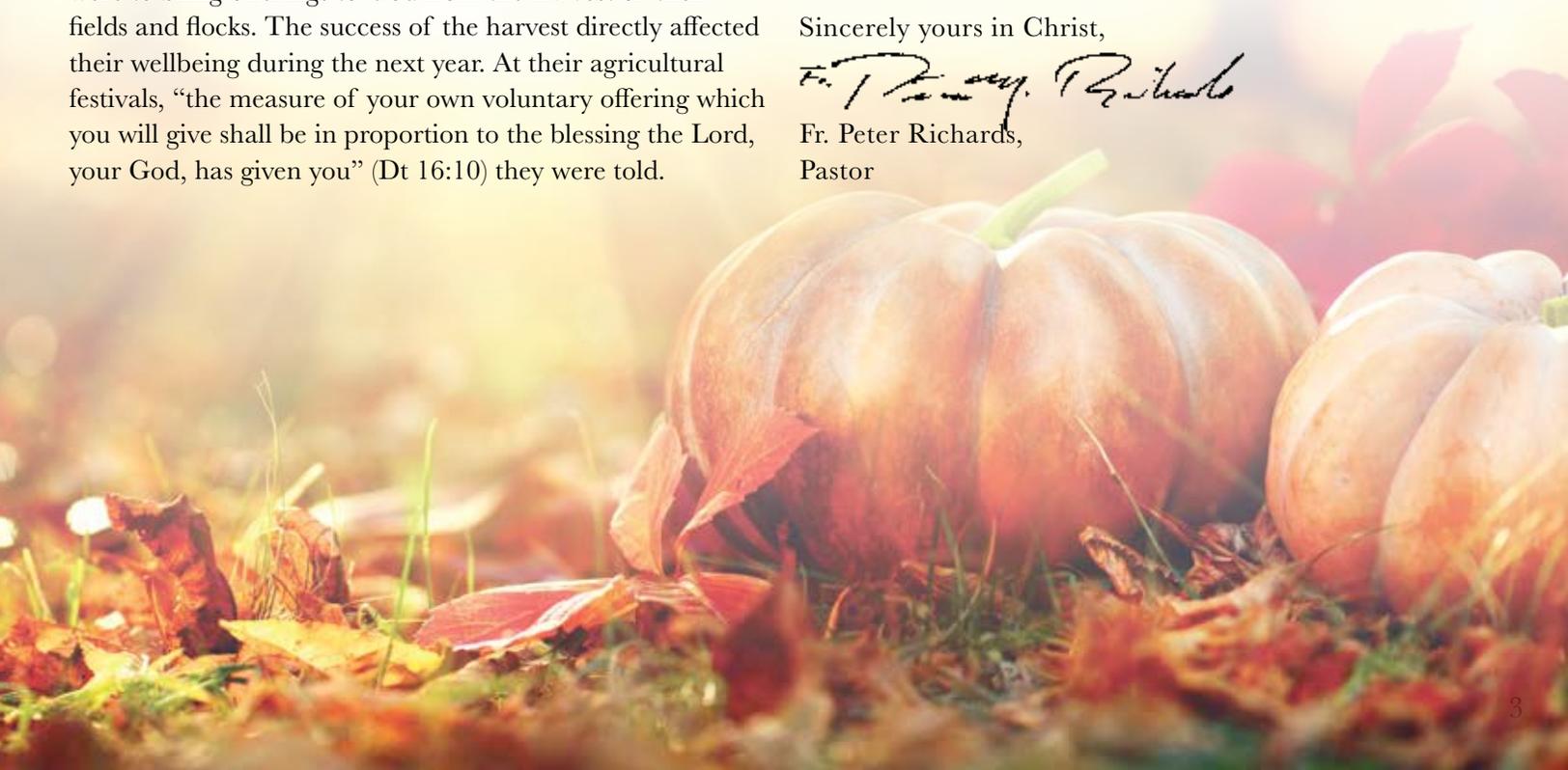


The same holds true for us. We may not have a harvest of fruits or grains, but we do receive a return for our own labor, whether it is in a factory, an office or a classroom. We are also invited by God to return a portion to Him for His glory and our own spiritual welfare, in proportion to the blessings we have received.

It’s ultimately a choice we make. Are we going to hoard everything we get, or are we going to give back to God a portion of what He gives us? When we give back to God, will we return just what’s left over after everything else is paid, or will our gifts have a higher priority? Are we, as stewards, going to return the first fruits, rather than the leftovers, to God? What choice will you make?

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Peter Richards,
Pastor



Jeanne and Rob Van Drasek: *Becom*

Faith isn't composed of a single moment of conversion or commitment. It's an ongoing process involving continual cooperation with God's grace. And stewardship, says parishioner Jeanne Van Drasek, becomes the avenue for both receiving and sharing those graces with others.

"We receive God's grace in many, many ways in life," Jeanne says. "It's God's free gift to us and stewardship is a way for us to respond to that grace. Sometimes that means taking an active leadership role in some ministry or parish function, but other times your very presence and willingness to be there is what you are supposed to be doing. Even something as simple as attending can become a way of channeling that grace."

Both raised in devoutly Catholic families, Jeanne and her husband, Rob, grew up understanding the importance of faith. It was modeled to them in countless ways throughout their formative years and internalized by them in their early adult life. So when Jeanne and Rob were married and started their own family, they knew without question that they wanted faith to play a central role in their family's life. Yet, it wasn't until key moments of grace that they began to truly understand how this should take form in their lives.

"Our kids all went to Catholic schools and we always understood ourselves to be the primary faith educators," Jeanne says. "But it wasn't until I attended my first Christ Renews His Parish [CRHP] that we really started talking about the faith, making it a real part of our family conversations. Our kids were in middle



Parishioners Jeanne and Rob Van Drasek

and high school at the time and that was a real turning point in our family's life."

Through Jeanne's and Rob's experiences at CRHP, the Van Draseks gained a much deeper understanding of the faith in terms of their relationship with God. And as that relationship with the Lord blossomed, they naturally began seeking to share their love for Him with others, beginning with their own children and trickling down to various ministries of the parish.

"Your faith drives your priorities," Rob says. "If you don't have faith, then your priorities will be somewhere else — whereas if you have a strong faith, then your priorities will be along those lines. CRHP was definitely a tremendous blessing in our lives and we've also received a lot of graces from the time we've been able to spend in adoration.

Overall, our involvement in the parish and the things we've been able to be a part of have blessed our lives tremendously."

Driven by a desire to build God's Kingdom, the Van Draseks have been involved in a wide variety of parish ministries and endeavors over the past 36 years. As a couple they've been mentors for Marriage Preparation, coordinate St. Michael's Adoration Chapel, are actively involved in the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and recently graduated from the Catechetical Institute. Rob has also been a Eucharistic Minister and continues to be involved in both the Knights of Columbus and Men's Group. Jeanne, meanwhile, enjoys attending daily Mass whenever possible, is a lector, belongs

"We receive God's grace in many, many ways in life. It's God's free gift to us and stewardship is a way for us to respond to that grace. Sometimes that means taking an active leadership role in some ministry or parish function, but other times your very presence and willingness to be there is what you are supposed to be doing. Even something as simple as attending can become a way of channeling that grace."

—JEANNE VAN DRASEK

Living for Christ



Living Channels of Grace Through Stewardship

to the Council of Catholic Women, and helps out with both Sharing & Caring Hands and the Funeral Luncheon Support.

Jeanne says, however, that it's important to note these ministries didn't happen in their lives all at once. So much of stewardship is discerning God's will at each new stage in one's life — giving what you can during that particular season.

"The thing about stewardship is it changes over the years, depending on where you are in your life," Jeanne says. "When we started doing weekly adoration, for example, we did it at a time that would work for us. We were so busy then running around with our kids, but we had this strong desire to grow in our faith. So we ended up taking a midnight hour together and it really helped us take time for our Lord, receiving so many graces from His real presence."

No matter where they've been called to serve, Jeanne and Rob say that grace has remained the key ingredient. It's what has guided them in their stewardship decision making and what has strengthened their marriage over the years. Their hope is to continue becoming channels of that grace to others, saying "yes" to the Lord wherever they can and building up the heavenly Kingdom.



Rob and Jeanne Van Drasek with their five grandchildren

This Month's Spotlight on Our Parish Ministries

RESPECT LIFE

Members inform the parishioners of pro-life issues, work with the archdiocesan Respect Life Office and attend archdiocesan workshops. Members also reach out with concrete help for practical needs, emotional and spiritual support with a spirit of hospitality to women and families letting them know they are not alone during difficult pregnancy, miscarriage, stillbirth or single parenting. Some functions include the pro-life newsletter, county fair booth staffing, parish festival booth, Respect Life Breakfast and Dinner, Life Chain, Day of the Unborn and working with Options for Women | Cornerstone Center.

Contact: *Jim Shovelain* — 763-497-3909 or Shovelain@juno.com

USHERS

Ushers are ministers of hospitality. They welcome people as they gather for Mass. Ushers are to be easily visible if someone needs assistance or directions to a particular area in the church. They may help seat people or assist the physically disabled or elderly. Ushers inquire if anyone needs to have Communion brought to them in their pew. They assist in handing out worship aids for Mass. Ushers take up the collection and help direct the congregation at Communion time. They distribute bulletins and other materials as needed. Ushers are observant and stay alert so they can readily assist someone that becomes ill or has a medical emergency. After Mass, ushers ensure that everything is in order in church and in the gathering space. Ushers must be able to take initiative and be comfortable approaching and directing parishioners as necessary. To serve as an usher in our parish, you must be in ninth grade or older.

Contact: *Steve Long* — 612-328-1544 or slong@stmccatholicchurch.org

Cindy Woitalla — 763-497-2745, ext. 232 or cwoitalla@stmccatholicchurch.org

ST·MICHAEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Questions and Answers About Our ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL

*Commitment Weekend is November 2-3.
Don't forget to bring your Commitment Card to Mass!*

Is your prayer life in need of a tune-up?

Honestly ask yourself, "How much time do I spend in prayer each week?" The answer is probably a bit embarrassing. Everyone wants to spend more time in prayer, but there's just never enough time to do everything we want to do. Good intentions are just that: intentions. This year, as you're discerning how you will offer your time to God, resolve to follow through with your commitments. Consider each moment you spend in prayer as nourishment for your soul. The spiritual health of our parish is only as strong as the sum of its parts (individual parishioners).

Is your level of parish involvement in need of a boost?

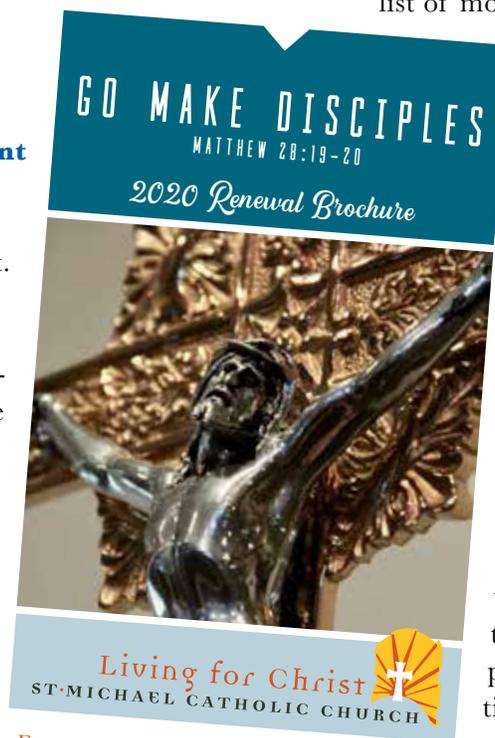
We give our talents back to God when we get involved in ministries at St. Michael. And, with a host of ministries to choose from, there's something for everyone. Sure, ministries give parishioners opportunities to serve others in the community, but they also benefit those in the ministry itself. Ask anyone who actively participates in a ministry at St. Michael, "Why do you enjoy serving in this way?" They'll probably say, "I get more out of the ministry than the people I serve." This year, as you're discerning how you will offer your talents to God, considering signing up for a ministry that may benefit you, like a Bible study, prayer group, or retreat. Or, contribute to an outreach ministry where your good deeds not only help others in the community, but also give you feelings of satisfaction and thankfulness.

Do you give a percentage of your income to the offertory?

It may be hard to see offertory giving as a way to "help yourself," but when we approach the subject from a spiritual viewpoint, it can lead to individual spiritual growth and an increase in faith. Even the most savvy businessperson worries about his or her personal finances from time to time. Adding a weekly offertory check to the

list of monthly bills may seem crazy but, ultimately, sacrificial giving forces us to cut unnecessary spending, create a budget and have faith that God will help us make it through the month. All of these are good things for each of us, individually. After faithfully giving to the offertory for a few months, many Catholics find that it's not only possible to give a weekly offering, but that the fruits of their gift far outweigh the expense.

At St. Michael, we ask that you give five percent to our parish, two percent to the building debt fund, one percent to the Catholic Services Appeal, and two percent to other charities. Why a percentage of income? First, because the tithe (10 percent) is a scriptural benchmark that the Church has honored for centuries (see Malachi 3:10). Secondly, we give a percentage of income because it is a common-sense standard by which everyone can equitably support the parish. Most of all, we give because we believe God comes first in everything, even finances.



Every parish family receives a special "Stewardship Package" in the mail that further explains our parish's vision of stewardship. It includes a booklet that describes every ministry in the parish, as well as your commitment card.

Living for Christ

A Spiritual House

Your Guide to Our Church



THE ART OF ST. MICHAEL: *The Rosary Windows*

By JIM THORP

The First Luminous Mystery: The Baptism in the River Jordan

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. John tried to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" Jesus said to him in reply, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed him. After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened [for him], and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove [and] coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." – Matthew 3:13-17

The first Luminous Mystery is the Baptism in the River Jordan, in which our Lord comes to be baptized by John the Baptist, who heralds His coming into the world. Recall that St. John has said, "I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the holy Spirit and fire" (Matthew 3:11). When the Christ comes to him asking to be baptized, it is a powerful moment for John and his followers, in which the Son of God is revealed and Rite of Baptism elevated to the level of a sacrament, cleansing believers of their sins and marking them indelibly as God's own. The waters of Baptism are transfigured and made holy by Jesus — as in other windows, we see this in the unusual, brilliant colors that appear pouring out from St. John's hand and running through the stream at our Lord's feet.

It is not Christ alone who is revealed in His Baptism, however — in this event, for the first time in Scripture, we see the Holy Trinity, with the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus like a dove and the voice of the Father in heaven claiming and affirming Him as His son. In the image of the window, Jesus's garments are pure white, and though it is obscured, the nimbus around his head has the three red rays identifying Him as one of the Persons of the Trinity. The dove, too, has a multicolored nimbus, and above them all the heavens have opened to reveal — amid the white stars and deep blue of distant, unknowable space, a great, golden, eight-pointed star: an ancient symbol of the Divine that appears in the dome of the church and throughout — signifying God the Father sending forth His light, His love and His blessing.



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**11300 Frankfort Parkway
St. Michael, MN 55376**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Sunday Mass

Saturday Vigil, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, 8:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m.

Daily Mass

Monday, 7:30 a.m.

Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, 7:30 a.m.

Friday, 7:45 a.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday, 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.,
3:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

Sunday, 9:30 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

Tuesday, 5:15 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.

Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/stmcatholicchurch>

QUOTES FOR CATHOLIC LIVING

“Once you have surrendered yourself, you make yourself receptive. In receiving from God, you are perfected and completed.” — *Venerable Servant of God Fulton Sheen*

A Ministry That Changes Lives *continued from page 2*

This ministry changes lives — the lives of the clients, their families and our lives, too. This is not a job, it's a privilege.

Clients need a simple loving gesture of time, love and support to see them through tough times. It is a blessing

to be invited into these lives and a continued part as long as they will have us.

A client and her husband stopped at our center on the way home from the hospital with their newborn, stating, “You have been waiting as long as we have to meet him, so we stopped here first.”

This article is presented in honor of October's designation of Respect Life Month.

Cornerstone Pregnancy Medical Clinic and Resource Center was established as a 501(c)3 nonprofit through a grassroots effort by St. Michael Catholic Church parishioners. Working together with the Knights of Columbus and the entire community, this group of generous and passionately pro-life individuals opened the doors of the clinic in July 2013. Since inception Cornerstone has expanded open hours of operation to four days per week, employ three part-time staff — including a Registered Nurse — and, most importantly, has hosted over 1500 client visits and has provided over 10,000 material items to moms and babies. Items include formula, diapers, baby clothes, bottles, and other needs. The parishioners of St. Michael continue to provide generous and consistent support through prayer, volunteer service and financial contributions — we are deeply grateful for every gift received. Your gifts allow the love and hope provided at Cornerstone to continue to empower women with truth and strengthen these young families. If you'd like more information on how to support Cornerstone, please contact fellow parishioners and Cornerstone employees Patty Washatka or Erin Cornell at 612-584-9449.