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CCST Officers (2023-2025):

President:

Deborah Auclair

Immediate Past President:

Nancy Thorpe

1st Vice President:

Vita Balsino

2nd Vice Pres. & Membership Chair:

Dianna Balsamo

Treasurer:

Nancy Thorpe

Recording Secretary:

Pat Lunsford

Board Members at Large:

**Bernie Chuinard, Judy Chuinard, &
Frances Smith**

Good-by & Thank you, Fr. Pat Grile

Fr. Pat has been the Christ Child Society of Tucson's Spiritual Director for over three years. He has been reassigned and is returning close to his roots in the Midwest. Here he served for 8 years as an associate pastor (1973-1981) and as Pastor (1999-2011).

Each year Fr. Pat conducted a retreat for members at the Redemptorist Center at Our Lady of the Desert Church.



Fr. Pat Grile at a CCST Retreat, Our Lady of the Desert

Here are some of Fr. Pat's thoughts from the retreat.

Society asks "What have you accomplished?" God asks "Are you going to bear good fruit?"

We should appreciate each other. Each of us is a person that God is working through.

Gratitude helps us see God in all of creation, draws us closer to Him and makes us more content.

We will miss you, Father Pat! Thank you for all you have done for the Christ Child Society!

Fr. Pat Grile's new address:

c/o St. Alphonsus Church
7025 Halifax Ave. N.
Minneapolis, MN 55429

CCST Elections

The CCST Slate of Officers for the 7/1/23 to 6/30/25 term was approved.

Officers were installed at our June 12, 2023 meeting.

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| [1] President: | Deb Auclair |
| [2] 1st Vice President: | Vita Balsino |
| [3] 2 nd Vice Pres. / Membership.: | Dianna Balsamo |
| [4] Treasurer: | Nancy Thorpe |
| [5] Recording Secretary: | Pat Lunsford |
| [6] Corresponding Secretary: | Vita Balsino |
| [7] Member (1) at Large: | Bernie Chuinard |
| [8] Member (2) at Large: | Judy Chuinard |
| [9] Member (3) at Large: | Frances Smith |



Pictured Sitting L to R: Dianna Balsamo, Vita Balsino, Standing L to R: Bernie Chuinard, Judy Chuinard, Deb Auclair, Nancy Thorpe

Randi, our great server from Scordatos where we hold out meetings, couldn't resist the chance to photobomb us! We hope she will someday be a member!



Judy Chuinard brought in new Member Michelle Way.



Nancy Jones visits with Nancy Thorpe.



Karen Z-Baker discovered CCST through Angela Schneider's reach out. She & Deb Auclair share a laugh.

NCCS Bi-annual Conference in Bethesda, MD

Sept. 29th-30th

The National Christ Child Society is having its bi-annual conference on 9/29 –30/2023.

Here are four reasons for attending:

Reason 1: Through networking, great speakers, workshops and more networking, we look forward to enhancing your leadership abilities!

Reason 2: A new DC tour to the largest Catholic Church in the U.S., the Lincoln Memorial and the Mary Virginia Merrick resting place.

Reason 3: New this year: A Christ Child Store, selling packable items for the trip home. Plus, be eligible to



National Christ Child Society

National Conference Registration

September 29 -30, 2023

win either \$500 cash or a new Apple Laptop (courtesy of an NCCS donor) if you sign up to attend both days.

Reason 4: In addition to the Annual Business Meeting we will be voting on the new bylaws.

National Day of Service will be expanded to a full month during November for CCST



We have chosen a food drive for this year's Day of Service. For the past 7 years, Christ Child Society chapters united in a National Day of Service across the US, offering service programs for children and their families. In recognition of our founder, Mary Virginia Merrick, chapters collected and distributed thousands of books, hosted reading programs in libraries and classrooms, led field trips and more, fulfilling her wise maxim: "find a need and fill it." NCCS has listened to chapter suggestions for this program, so they've changed it up a bit.

National has provided some direction and this year our theme is:

Christ Child Society: United in Service.

This year special service programs has been changed to November, Mary Virginia Merrick's birthday month. Her birthday is November 2, 1866. We plan to expand the timing for this project to the whole month to allow our Chapter members more flexibility in collection.

CCST Collection location: Our Lady of the Desert the weekend of October 7-8, 2023. Monetary donations are also welcome.

For further information: Deb Auclair @ (585)309-9064 or by email info@christchildtucson.org.



Literacy: Our Mother of Sorrow's Catholic School Receives a Book Vending Machine from CCST

By Carissa Krautscheid August 4, 2023

Our Mother of Sorrows Catholic School (OMOS) is the latest recipient of a new Book Vending Machine donated by the Tucson Chapter of the Christ Child Society.



New Outlook

Diocese of Tucson Online News

Seven members of the Christ Child Society joined OMOS principal, vice principal, and pastor for the ribbon cutting and dedication of the new Book Vending Machine. For OMOS pastor, Fr. George Holley, this was the first time blessing a vending machine. The ribbon was cut by two OMOS students: Annette, a sixth grader, and David, a second-grade student. They were the first to select books from the Vending Machine.

How does a Book Vending Machine work? Teachers set classroom goals for their students, such as a reading goal or a grade goal. Then when a student has earned their reward of "Mustang Money," they can come to choose a book from the Machine. The books are theirs to keep, which encourages literacy and a love of reading. The Christ Child Society has committed to replenishing the books as needed.

"In 2022, over 60 percent of low-income families have no books in their homes," said Deb Auclair, current President of the Christ Child Society of Tucson.

The Tucson Chapter of the Christ Child Society has supported other literacy initiatives across the city and at OMOS. They revamped the school's library which had become a storage room. Christ Child members purchased new shelves, tables, and chairs in addition to donating 1,000 books and organizing the library. Christ Child members also served as Santa's elves during the Christmas season, to bring books to the students at OMOS.

The idea for a Book Vending Machine at OMOS came about last year at the Christ Child Society's annual Red Wagon Fundraiser. A second-grade student attended the event to speak about how much of a difference it would make for him personally to have a Book Vending Machine at OMOS. His testimony inspired enthusiastic participation in funding a Book Vending Machine for his school.

OMOS Vice Principal Valerie Ramirez shared, "We are so grateful to the Christ Child Society for helping to bring literacy to our kids. This is going to bring joy to a lot of kids and spark a love of learning and reading. We are so thrilled and grateful for your support. The Christ Child Society does such important work."

Angela Schneider is the President of the National Christ Child Society and previously led the Tucson Chapter. "It's our pleasure to be able to provide for the children," she said. "Our founder, Mary Virginia Merrick, first initiated layettes for the newborns of impoverished moms and then it was literacy. Literacy is so important. These books are something they can treasure and keep. So, thank you for taking care of our children!"

OMOS Receives a Book Vending Machine from CCST (cont'd.)

Based on the success of our April 2023 Red Wagon Fundraiser, CCST was able to provide a Book Vending Machine to Our Mother of Sorrows, (OMOS) Catholic School! A ribbon cutting ceremony was held of August 4, 2023 at the school. At our Red Wagon Fundraiser in April of 2023, a young boy stole the show with his heartfelt speech about his love of books. Good news flash: his brother was born and he is able to change his world with reading!



Generous donor:

A donation was made on behalf of Marie Edwards for CCST Literacy. Marie was a CCST member who really enjoyed reading with students at San Xavier Mission School.



Before the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony pictured L to R are: Bernie Chuinard, Angela Schneider, Judy Chuinard, Nancy Thorpe, Deb Auclair, and Frances Smith. Frances gave us her extra Covid tests that our partner, Aviva Children's Services, can use.



Parents were present at Our Mother of Sorrows to see their children obtain a book from the new book vending machine.

A young student proudly shows the token he received from his teacher to "buy" a book to keep!

Layettes Program (Dianna Balsamo)

CCST member, Marcia Wells' husband is a Knight of Columbus at St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church in Oro Valley. The Knights donated \$1,250 to CCST! We are very grateful.



Chris & Marcia Wells proudly display the generous check.

The Christ Child Society of Tucson's Layette Committee has been blessed with the purchase of some beautiful items for our layettes from Spencer's via John Mckenna. The Layette Committee has been working diligently to get these items packed into Layette bags. Thanks to our Layette Ladies (Vita Balsino, Eileen Geraghty, and Marcia Wells, and Committee Chair, Dianna Balsamo). They deserve a hand!



CCST was also fortunate to receive a donation of 5,000 diapers to use in our layettes from Diana Davenport, a parishioner at Our Lady of the Desert.

We have been so blessed that we need another storage unit to store all of the donations we have received. Here are before and after pictures:



Before picture with Dianna, Vita and Marica

Nancy Thorpe and Angela Schneider take on the herculean job of transporting the donations to the storage unit. Awesome!



After picture—additional unit with fundraising items, red wagons and totes.

Wings Foster Teens Program (Deb Auclair)

Another partner agency CCST was able to help this quarter was the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) of Southern AZ. Renee Hartje, MA, is the Director of Advocacy for this organization. After our successful April 23, 2023 Red Wagon Fundraiser at which Renee spoke about CAC, we were able to make donations to them. Our donations help young people (ages 9-17) when they arrive at CAC because they will now receive some "self-care" packages as they come through the doors.



Self-care includes Classroom Calming Kits, Feelings & Emotions Grab & Play Games, and Stress Anxiety Pressure Relieving Toys and other sensory items.

Children will be given social emotional materials as they wait for their interview in the front room also return after the interview.

These donations will help make sure this location is a welcoming and safe environment. These donations help them express their feelings.



Karen Z.-Baker packed the first backpack!

Because of the large numbers involved (600 bags / year) the CCST Board approved of ordering backpacks to help support the ladies who currently sew drawstring bags for Wings' foster teens.

These backpacks are just a backup in case the sewers can't keep up.



Wings' for Foster Teens continues to deliver drawstring bags over the summer.



Karen Klavetter is always helping the babies and teens CCST serves. She finds the best deals for baby clothes and shampoo.

Fostering Hope: 1st Annual Southern Arizona Foster Care Conference was sponsored by CCST

This “Fostering Hope” event was held at the Donna R. Liggins Recreation Center on N Sixth Avenue on 8/14/23. About sixty people attended, including Kinship and Adoptive parents, Catholic Comm. Svs. Staff, and AZ agency partners, (including CCST!)



La Don Sawyer, Catholic Comm. Services’ Executive Dir. of Deaf, Child Welfare & Nutrition Services, gives a shout out to CCST for the goodie bags!

Arizona’s greatest need is for foster families who will care for sibling groups and children age four and older – especially teens.

Catholic Comm. Services’ foster care specialists help place children and respond to foster families. They also license relative and non-relative families interested in foster care licensing.

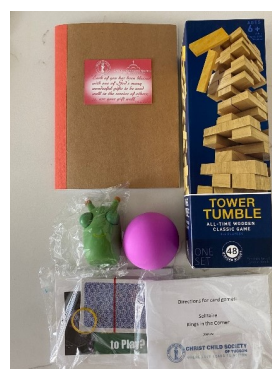
CCST provided the goodie bags and gently used books. A Place to Call Home co-sponsored the event with Catholic Comm. Svs. They were very happy with the goodie bag and contents.

David Lujan, Arizona Department of Child Safety Manager, said, “when children are removed from their parent’s custody by the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS), they need physical and emotional safety”.

Catholic Comm. Services recruits and prepares families to welcome and care for children in their homes and offer ongoing support services to enhance the foster family experience.



Lillian Downing, Associate Director, Child Welfare Programs, hands a CCST goodie bag to a child.



Goodie bag contents



Samuel P. Dyer, Executive Director, thanks CCST for “the fabulous bags you provided for the participants”.

Fostering Hope, cont.

Aurora Thrush—LPC, a speaker at this conference, has served children from 18 months to 18 years. She feels empathy is very important attribute to have for foster parents, but it can lead to secondary trauma. Memorable lines from the author, Brene Brown: “We don’t have to do all of it alone. We were never meant to.”

Ms. Thrush noted that parenting is a 24x7 job and parents need to pay attention to their own wellness. There is something called Secondary trauma. The expectation that we can be immersed in others’ suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it, is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.

She talked about stress from adoptive parenting and the importance of discussing household rules, such as do we have meals together, do we wear shoes in the house, etc. Let them know they are heard. Smile with your eyes. Body language is important and means a lot.

Don’t forget how important self-care, sleep and exercise are. Spotlight what you want to grow!



Bernie Chuinard, Angela Schneider and Deb Auclair attended to hand out the goodie bags.



Nancy Thorpe and Judy Chuinard prepare journals for the goodie bags.

Bernie Chuinard, a CCST Board Member at Large, said it well, “we are here on this earth for a purpose. We are here to serve.”

Amy Ramsey –MA Psychology & Certified Hypnotherapist, another speaker at this conference, said “We have the keys to our own mental prison.” Tell yourself “my best is enough” and also “I am not perfect and I don’t expect you to be perfect”. She talked about foster / kinship parents being lighthouses, who serve, direct and guide and are committed to provide hope. They do require maintenance to keep their lights / beacons shining.

Here is an acronym for this conference’s theme:

HOPE:

H = Honor yourself

O = Openness to support

P = Practice appreciation –make it a superpower!

E = Emotional awareness (mindfulness)

What disrupts life balance, what restores it, what keeps it going? The sign on her desk says “change is making the unfamiliar familiar. Behavior is a symptom of your thought pattern. Two books recommended:

“Positive Intelligence” & “Tell Yourself a Better Lie” (based on the “fact” that your mind will believe anything you tell it! It becomes your story).

St. Augustine's Catholic H.S. Celebrates His Feast Day

Christ Child of Tucson members and friends spent the morning of August 28th at St Augustine's High School on St. Augustine's Feast Day. The mission of the Christ Child Society is "to express our love of Christ by our personal service to God's children in need, regardless of race or creed". Each year the St. Augustine's student have helped us make fleece blankets that we distribute to the needy. This year the St.

her name), my baby cousin, a day care, my mom and one of our favorites, a puppy shelter.

I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20:35

These Junior High School students area truly living out this scripture. St. Paul is reminding us that God has asked us to help those in need.

A shout out to Saint Augustine — Here are some of his quotes:

God has no need of your money, but the poor have. You give it to the poor, and God receives it. What do you possess if you possess not God?

The love of worldly possessions is a sort of bird line, which entangles the soul, and prevents it flying to God.

God bestows more consideration on the purity of the intention with which our actions are performed than on the actions themselves.

Our life and our death are with our neighbor.



Augustine teachers loved the idea of the students not only making the blankets but also give them to a needy person that is in their world. This win-win activity not only gets fleece blankets made, but will allow the students to realize the joy in giving.

Here are some of the places these blankets may end up as the students mentions that they would like to give them to: My big sister, my best friend, my grandma, my Yoga teacher (who must be quite popular because two people said





Some of the Junior Class ask us to join them in a picture that might be in their yearbook!



St. Augustine Jr. and CCST volunteer, Ann MacDonald work making a fleece blanket.



Next generation is outstanding. When faced with a blanket with a hole in the center, the team made it into a poncho!



Pat Lunsford, Liz McCandlish and Bonnie Alberts helping the Junior Class.

Quotes from St. Augustine:

He was a 4th-century theologian who learned to reject his fleeting human desires and surrender himself to God and grace, demonstrated the importance of:

- Understanding that humans are born sinners. We cannot trust our own desires because our desires always lead us astray. We are wired to behave sinfully, even if we know our sinful behavior is pointless and will only make us unhappy.
- Knowing pride makes us believe that we are the drivers of our own lives, but we aren't. We can't be better people by working harder or developing better habits. We become better people by recognizing that God is in charge of our lives.
- Accepting God's grace. Knowledge or learning are not enough to make us good; only God can make us good.

Key Things to Note:



CCST has been approved as an AZ Department of Revenue QCO (Qualified Charitable Organization). Please note we are #22131.

September 18, 2023 - note the September meeting is (the 3rd Monday of the month).

October 7-8, 2023—CCST Food Drive at Our Lady of the Desert

February 10, 2024 - the CCST annual Red Wagon Fundraiser will be held on Saturday, February 10, 2024 in the evening. Please save the date and tell your friends and family!

February 24-25, 2024—the Wings Foster Teen Collection weekend at Santa Catalina Church is happening! We are so grateful for their continued support. This Church and as typically raises \$8,000.00 in in kind donations for the support of foster teens in Tucson.

CCST Calendar of Upcoming Events

September-23							October 2023							November 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	National Service Month			1	2	3	4
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	29	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					25	26	27	28	30	in honor of Mary VM	
December 2023							January 2024							February 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	29			
31																				
= CCST Meeting at Scordatos						= NCCS conference					= Food drive @ OLD in Oct. & Wings collection @ SCCC in Feb.					= Red Wagon Fundraiser				

In Closing...

The Paradoxes of Servant Leadership

—Poem by Brewer, as cited by Hansel

Strong enough to be weak
Successful enough to fail
Busy enough to make time
Wise enough to say “I don’t know”
Serious enough to laugh
Rich enough to be poor
Right enough to say “I’m wrong”
Compassionate enough to discipline
Mature enough to be childlike
Important enough to be childlike
Important enough to be last

Planned enough to be spontaneous
Controlled enough to be flexible
Free enough to endure captivity
Knowledgeable enough to ask questions
Loving enough to be angry
Great enough to be anonymous
Responsible enough to play
Assured enough to be rejected
Victorious enough to lose
Industrious enough to relax
Leading enough to serve.

To watch our latest video, please scan the QR code using your cell phone:



If you would like to become a member or learn more about The Christ Child Society of Tucson, please visit our webpage:

<https://christchildtucson.org/750-Contact-Us.html>

or call: 585-309-9064 or write CCST, PO Box 36212, Tucson AZ, 85740

*choose
joy*