

An Open Letter of Gratitude to the People of East Tennessee

Having celebrated Thanksgiving just a few short weeks ago, I am reminded in a special way of my gratitude for the past eight years at Catholic Charities of East Tennessee.

My gratitude is heightened this year because I have recently received a new assignment from my religious Superior and will be moving to my Community in Washington, D.C., shortly after Christmas. I am deeply grateful for the wonderful people I have been privileged to know and work with in East Tennessee and for the steadfast support of the work of Catholic Charities in our Diocese.

Over the past four years, I have been particularly humbled and grateful to have served as Catholic Charities' Executive Director. With your generous support and partnership, we have been able to build on the legacy left by Father Ragan Schriver and continue to provide vital programs and expanded services to some of our most vulnerable neighbors right here in East Tennessee.

Our mission is clear – to be the hands, feet, face, and heart of Jesus to others – offering help and providing hope to so many in need. With your help, we reach out to the poor and the vulnerable, to those on the margins. As Pope Francis says, *to those on the periphery*. With kindness and love, I have seen so many lives changed, as we have walked with our brothers and sisters in their times of need.

I want to thank our wonderful staff, which touches countless lives each day in the work they selflessly provide. I want to thank our parishes, priests, and pastors who partner with us to connect with those who are hurting and those in need. I want to thank our Bishop for the support and leadership he provides, uniting us in service to others.

And most importantly I want to thank you, the people of East Tennessee, who have shown yourselves to be a caring, compassionate, and loving community. Your support makes the work of Catholic Charities possible. Your desire to make this community one of love and compassion propels us in our ministry. Without you, so many would be left behind – *left on the periphery*.

Thank you for your continued support of Catholic Charities. You will be in my prayers and I ask for a remembrance in yours as well.

With Gratitude,

Sister Mary Christine Cremin, R.S.M.
Executive Director, Catholic Charities of East Tennessee



P.S. If you would like to support the work of Catholic Charities here in East Tennessee, there is an envelope enclosed in this newspaper.