

As Universal Church, We Can Help

Seemingly unrelated social issues percolate around the political, social and economic spheres of our country.

In the midst of this chaos, your Catholic Charities is trying to pull together actions to address some of them. They all bear attention but they all cost money.

Catholics sometimes get asked what we believe and stumble for answers that will be both understandable and faithful. We are given several sources for answers, and we have adopted them into weekly prayer at Sunday Mass when we recite the creed.

In the context of today's turmoil, our recitation of "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty ... " can be reduced to a rote expression that requires little thought, until we put it into the context of civil and charitable affairs.

In particular, when we get to the part of the creed that identifies us as "one, holy, Catholic and apostolic church," we sometimes forget that our Protestant friends use the same words but don't capitalize "Catholic."

Rather, they use the small "c" to adopt the "universal" definition of the Church — it's worldwide, it's universal, it's *catholic*.

As Diogenes may have said, it's not Athenian or Greek, or any other nationality. It's Catholic.

As the universal Church we identify with the suffering of the poor, the sick, the hungry, the infirm and the forgotten in every country and every culture. It's no wonder then that the Catholic universal Church is called upon for guidance on the great moral, economic and political questions of the day. Included on the list are the complications surrounding immigration, refugee resettlement, health and poverty.

Without trying to answer all of these at once, Catholic Charities is making sure that

Charitably Speaking



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we address them during our first A Movable Feast on Oct. 24 at the Nordlof Center in Rockford when Wayne Messmer comes to present the story of St. Damien of Molokai.

The story of Father

Damien de Veuster, as he accepts his assignment to Molokai to minister to the lepers even though he realizes he likely will never return, is a story of immigration. It is also a story of the refugee as those who are afflicted with Hansen's disease are effectively exiled to Hawaii, but not for a vacation. As they face a life of agony and exile for reasons not of their own making, it is the story of refugee resettlement.

Wayne Messmer is no stranger to suffering, either. He was the victim of a random mugging and shooting, unsure if he would ever speak or sing again. However, he returned to the microphone and the stage to sing before sports events and to present "Damien."

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commemorates Father Damien's canonization as his reward for service and suffering.

At Catholic Charities we are stepping up preparations for Wayne

Messmer's arrival in Rockford to help us tell the story of caring for those among us who are suffering.

You can actively help alleviate suffering through the efforts of Catholic Charities programs by joining us Oct. 24. For more information about our Moveable Feast call 815-979-7214 or purchase tickets at <https://catholiccharitiesmoveablefeast.eventbrite.com>. Also watch your parish bulletin notices and social media for information describing a night to learn more about what one part — our part — of the universal, Catholic Church can do.

I am not an Athenian
or a Greek, but a
citizen of the world.

—Diogenes
