**MOTHER TERESA WOMEN’S GIVING CIRCLE GRANTS $23,000 TO SIX LOCAL NONPROFITS AMID PANDEMIC**

The Mother Teresa Women’s Giving Circle members continued their efforts to benefit our local nonprofits despite the unprecedented pandemic. Although the pandemic required the giving circle to cancel several of their spring events, the members creatively brought their efforts to a virtual environment. Over the course of one week, over 115 members viewed presentations from ten nonprofits and took part in a virtual voting process selecting six nonprofits to receive grant funding.

On Monday, May 11th, Bishop Fabre along with the members of the Mother Teresa Women’s Giving Circle came together via ZOOM and made presentations of $83,000 in grants to these local nonprofits, all with the direct intent of making a difference in the lives of women, children and families within the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux:

* **Individual and Family Assistance** ($20,500 for family assistance needs such as rent, utilities and gas)
* **The Haven** ($20,000 for women and their children to have safe transportation to appointments as well as funding emergency placements in safe secure locations)
* **CASA of Lafourche** ($12,500 to assist in bringing awareness to the community regarding child abuse and neglect in order to recruit additional child advocates as well as updating necessary equipment)
* **CASA of Terrebonne** ($12,500 to assist in bringing awareness to the community regarding child abuse and neglect in order to recruit additional child advocates as well as for a traveling tutor program)
* **Children’s Advocacy Center** ($12,500 to assist with ensuring that victims and families have one place to go for their forensic interviews to reduce trauma to children)
* **Catholic Community Center** ($5,000 to assist in purchasing a generator to aid in becoming a Second Harvest distribution site ensuring the people of lower Lafourche are able to get the food needed at the food bank)

 “Unprecedented times call for extraordinary measures, and the members of our Mother Teresa Women’s Giving Circle knew we needed to step up during this difficult time,” said Any Ponson, executive director of the Catholic Foundation of South Louisiana. “Rather than postponing our events, our steering committee worked together to bring everything in a virtual environment to push forward. Due to their innovative ideas, our members’ contributions grew substantially and we were able to select six amazing local nonprofits to support this year. We knew that during these difficult times the women, children and families in our local community needed support now more than ever. We are thrilled to be able to make these grants this year and look forward to growing our support in years to come.”

For more information about the Mother Teresa Women’s Giving Circle, please visit <https://www.catholicfoundationsl.org/womens-giving-circle/>. If interested in joining, please contact Amy Ponson at (985) 850-3116, or aponson@htdiocese.org.

*Mother Teresa Women’s Giving Circle Steering Committee members include:* Bonnie Brady Babin, Wanda Birdsall, Andree Casey, Ginny Corte, Rene Danos David, Charlotte Bollinger, Emelie Cheramie, Mary Duplantis, Susan David, Brenda Riviere, Kelly Thibodaux, Lillie Romano, Clarisse Waguespack, Renee Gautreaux and Amy Ponson.