



# Christ Child Society Of Pittsburgh

November, 2011

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh is a non-profit Catholic association of lay volunteers embracing members of all denominations, expressing its members' love of the Christ Child through service to God's children regardless of race, color or creed.

## CHRISTMAS MASS & LUNCHEON

We will be celebrating the Liturgy on December 15th at noon, St. Paul's Cathedral, Oakland. A holiday luncheon is planned at the Pittsburgh Athletic Club following mass. We welcome all members and guests! Watch your mailbox for details!

## NATIONAL CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY CONFERENCE, "Building on Our Legacy"

### OFFICERS

President

Joyce Orr

Vice President

Laura Merzlak

Recording Secretary

Marian Flowers

Corresponding Secretary

Margie DiDomenio

Treasurer

Justina Purpura

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kathy Fitzgibbon

Barbara Fredette

Cheryl George

Mary Jo Kelly

Pat Maida

Ellen O'Brien

Advisor:

Judy Kern

Ellen O'Brien, Laura Merzlak & Tina Purpura attended this years' conference September 23 \* 24th in Bethesda, MD. The weekend began with a seminar on Friday afternoon relating to accounting and banking practices. Brian Giganti, CPA, answered questions about chapter accounting and tax practices that we should have in place and be using. After dinner on Friday, we were introduced to Susan Ellis, who was leading the program on Saturday about volunteerism. Ms. Ellis was quite entertaining and had us participating in thought provoking questions, "Start Your Engines: Perspectives on Our Legacy".

Ms. Ellis of Energize, Inc. held a dynamic workshop on Saturday which centered on her theme of "Is it still your Grandmother's Volunteering"? Many ideas and suggestions were provided and discussed on seeking volunteers and volunteer management, as well as membership suggestions. There were 70 CCS members attending from across the Country and made for terrific networking and discussion.

It would behoove us to share this information with our Chapter so that we can all get "Energized"!

The business meeting portion of the Conference was held and Laura & Tina served as Delegates, representing our Chapter.

- An update was given as to the continuation of the Cause for Mary Virginia Merrick's Canonization. Information on this is available on the National Christ Child website, [www.nationalchristchildsoc.org](http://www.nationalchristchildsoc.org). The National Christ Child Society is in the process of updating their website so that more information is available to Members as well as persons who may be interested in CCS. If you have any information you think may be important to include on this site, please contact Laura Merzlak.
- A challenge has been made to all Chapters regarding the increase of by

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10%. The Chapter with the greatest increase, over 10%, will have a speaker of their choice for the Members. (Prospective Members, non-member volunteers, and guests are always welcome at our events. Please contact Mary Jo Kelly to follow up on prospective members).

- NCCS is beginning a long range planning program and will be contacting members and Chapters for their input. More information will follow as we receive it.
- The 2012 Budget was proposed and passed unanimously. Copies are available for review.
- Convention, 2012 will be held Sept. 20-22, 2012 in Detroit MI. This will mark the 125th year of National Christ Child Society. Let's plan to attend, it is an easy drive from Pittsburgh and the friendship and networking will be worthwhile!

The Conference concluded on Saturday evening with a beautiful Liturgy and dinner. This was held at The Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart. The home was built in 1904 as the Hamilton House by George E. Hamilton, Sr. a prominent Washington lawyer and Dean of Georgetown University Law School and his wife, Louise Merrick Hamilton. Louise Merrick Hamilton was the younger sister of our foundress, Mary Virginia Merrick. The Chapel Sanctuary was a private prayer chapel of the Hamilton family. Mary Virginia Merrick was known to reside briefly at the estate, known as "Stone Ridge" and worshiped in the chapel. The former ballroom is now part of the Chapel and we were blessed to have Rev. Msgr. Thomas M. Duffy as our celebrant. This was a wonderful Conference and sent us back with ideas and enthusiasm to share!

## RED WAGON FARE, 2011

The annual Red Wagon Fare was held on Saturday, October 8, 2011 at the Pittsburgh Field Club. One-hundred seventy-nine guests enjoyed lunch and the presentation of 29 Chinese auction gifts, 6 purses on the Purse Raffle, 10 Silent Auction gifts, 2 baskets of cheer, note cards designed by Barbara Fredette, children's jewelry made by Joyce Orr, delicious baked goods, a 50-50 raffle, and two \$500 grand prize raffles. A financial recap of the Red Wagon will be published as soon as all expenses have been paid. A very special thanks goes to Suzette Venturini, this year's RW chair, and to all the committee chairs and Christ Child members and friends who supported this event.

## RED WAGON FARE, 2012

SAVE THE DATE! OCTOBER 13, 2012 PITTSBURGH FIELD CLUB

### Thanksgiving Blessings

As we fast approach the end of 2011, I want to thank all of you for the unending support you have given to me as acting President.

Although the attendance at the 2011 Red Wagon Fare was lighter than previous years, thanks to Suzette Venturini, we can be proud of our success. Thank you Suzette for undertaking this major project. Many ooh's were heard when we entered the dining room. Our signature red wagons were the center of the table decorations & beautifully wrapped boxes were included. Each winner of the table prize was thrilled with the beautifully wrapped box, and more thrilled with the Lenox vases inside! Thank you Pat Maida & Judy Kern for not only the great table prizes, but the door prizes as well! The purse raffle was again a hit, thanks to Cheryl George, Syble Shadle, and their team. We were excited when Jane Leavy went home with the \$400.00 cash prize that day and a very cute evening bag to boot! Please continue to keep Jane and all those in your prayers as they recover from various problems. Surely Jane will be out with that new evening bag soon!

**2012 will mark the 15th annual RWF, but more impressively, this will be the 20th year anniversary for our Pittsburgh Chapter! Now is the time to get our creativity & ideas going since we have a date! A team will be put together this Spring so that planning may formally begin!**

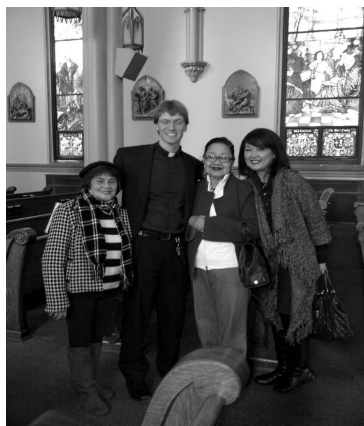
Our Angels' Closet Team of Molly Kelley & her shoppers have been extremely busy with coat buying. Angels' Closet has served roughly 500 children this year. The group of volunteers who show up weekly to wait on our clients are great fun to be around! Consider joining Molly's team next year.

The Layette Team continues to shop and pack bags for the various organizations we deliver to. Our shoppers/delivery persons, Mary Ann Gonot & Marian Flowers are always on the go. Phyllis Dombrowski & Doris Delserone packed 40 layettes last month & will be scheduling another packing before Christmas. Thanks to Diane Reich, there are always beautiful, hand crocheted blankets to include in the layettes. Diane has a committed team of talented knitters! (most crocheted though!)

We were a group of 20 strong for Mass on Nov. 2 at St. Mary's of the Mount. It was a wonderful way to celebrate our foundress, Miss Mary Virginia Merrick. We then headed "down the hill" to the Grand Concourse for lunch. Tina Purpura's mother is visiting from the Philippines, her husband Larry, and a family friend of hers joined us at Mass. We hope to continue this as an annual Celebration.

May God bless all of you. . . . .IN THE NAME OF THE CHRIST CHILD, **LAURA MERZLAK**

*"Let every beautiful sight and sound uplift you nearer to Him in gratitude."* Mary Virginia Merrick



*Pictured (left to right) at the November 2 Mass at St. Mary's of the Mount is MILA LOPEZ a prospective member of CC, FR. MICHAEL J. STUMPF, AVELINA FLORENDO (mother of Tina Purpura and a new member of Christ Child), and TINA PURPURA.*



Christ Child members enjoy lunch at the Grand Concourse after a Mass of celebration for Mary Virginia Merrick.

## **LAYETTES**

On Thursday, October 13, Phyllis Dombrowski, Doris Delserone and Diane Reich met at the Christ Child Center and packed 40 layettes. Two of the layettes were given out that day at Angel's Closet. Marian Flowers and Mary Ann Gonot delivered 34 layettes between Magee Hospital and the Pregnancy Resource Center. There are currently 4 layettes in inventory. Marian and Mary Ann will be shopping to restock our layette items. Another layette packing will take place before the end of this year.

## **CAMP AIM SUMMER CAMP 2012**

*Molly Kelley will collect any old ties or vests your husband wishes to part with. Also keep in mind they can used T shirts for art projects. For the prom, if you have a prom gown you want be worn with joy..... or fancy scarves, purses and other dressy accessories, please bring to any meeting. Summer will be here before we know it.*

## **ANGEL'S PLACE**

We will continue to serve Angels' Place with our cookie project. More information on this will follow. Children from Angels' Place were clients this year at Angels' Closet, so we truly serve this project in more than one way!

## **MASS & MEMORIALS**

There will be an updated listing of Mass and Memorials in the next issue of our newsletter.

## **ANGELS' CLOSET**

*As our 8 weeks distribution period draws to an end, I would like to say thank you to all of the committee for a tremendous year. We have given out over 400 coats hats and gloves. With 2 weeks left we will probably reach 550 or more. We also distributed a lot of books. The children and parents for the most part have been very appreciative of our help. There was a major increase from the parishes and food banks around Allegheny County. Hopefully we have warmed some bodies of the little and big angels that have come through our doors. I think I can speak for the entire committee that it certainly warms our hearts as we carry out this mission for CC. **Thank you to all who help both physically and financially.***

*We will continue to collect both new and used children's books for distribution at the Angels Closet.*

## **SPECIAL PRAYERS**

**PAT DOUGHTERTY**, a long-time member of our organization, passed away on October 27. We ask all members to remember Pat and her family in their prayers. Her husband, Ed, has served as the tax accountant for our Christ Child organization for many years.

Our special prayers also go out to the family of **JOHN PLOEGER**, who passed away on September 9. John was the husband of our very dedicated Christ Child member, Mary Ellen Ploeger.

## Dates to Remember

December 15

- Christ Child Mass and Christmas Party

October 13

- Red Wagon Fare 2012 - Pittsburgh Field Club

### NOTEWORTHY:

- If you would like to donate cookies for Angel's Place (*please— no nuts or peanut butter!*), bring them to any General Meeting and they will be distributed to one of the facilities;
- Gently used and/or new children's books are still being collected for distribution during Angel's Closet. Please bring any books to the General Meeting or give to Molly Kelley;
- The next General Meeting of the Christ Child Society will be on Thursday, January 19, 2012, at Our Lady of the Angels Auditorium. Lunch will be at 11:30 am, followed by the General Meeting at 12:15. Please make every effort to attend; Lunch coordinators are Diane Reich and Doris Delserone.
- A special thanks to Rose Casciato and Diane Reich who were our lunch coordinators for October.

Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh

P.O. Box 11324  
Pittsburgh, PA 15238-1324

Merry  
Christmas

TO: