



I'm a little pencil in the hands of a writing God, who is sending a love letter to the world." -Blessed Mother Teresa

# The Little Pencil

Issue No. 9 April 2016

## Human Rights Office Newsletter

Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph

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Welcome to the April issue of The Little Pencil. The aim of this publication is to keep supporters, prayer group members, and volunteers informed of new initiatives and updates concerning Human Rights matters in our diocese.

Thank you to the many who contact our office to help keep me up-to-date and also for all the warm greetings from the many volunteers who attended the VIC Recertification in March.

In the peace of Christ, Laurie Jo Holmes

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**Mother Teresa to be Canonized September 4**



## Presenting... Jeannine Arens

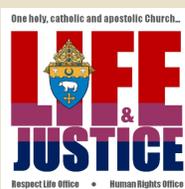


Volunteers play a vital role in the Human Rights Ministry, working alongside staff members, other volunteers and the community to jointly achieve our goal to uphold the dignity of human life. Each newsletter, we select a volunteer who makes the world a better place. Please contact us if you'd like to nominate someone to be featured in a future edition of *The Little Pencil*.

Jeannine Arens has been a parishioner of St. John LaLande Parish since 2002. She and her husband, Ken, raised their children in St. John Francis Regis Parish and never dreamed that they would become involved in Prison Ministry, yet Jeannine travels to a maximum security prison several times each month to share the *Good News* with men who are wanting to change their lives for the better. Jeannine takes her dedication to this Corporal Work of Mercy to heart and considers it a privilege to serve our Lord with the poorest of the poor - many of whom have never experienced Christ's love in their entire lives!

Over the past 15 years serving the incarcerated, Jeannine has learned the men and women who are incarcerated are like us in many ways; they worry about their children, their aging parents, along with all the struggles we face in life. Even after all this time, she still cringes at the loud "slamming doors" as the volunteers enter and exit the facility, but the amazing beauty of sharing the Word of God with the offenders and seeing their lives change for the better over time goes beyond words.

Jeannine, thank you for your dedication! We join you in praying that the incarcerated come to know Christ and can live with inner peace and spend their lives in service to God through serving others.



The Life & Justice Campaign promotes the fight against injustice toward the dignity of the person and sanctity of human life.

Please join us in congratulating the  
Life & Justice Grant Recipients for 2016:

A Simple House

Amethyst Place

## Sisters of Mercy Against Human Trafficking

U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking is a collaborative, faith-based national network that offers education, supports access to survivor services, and engages in advocacy in an effort to eradicate modern-day slavery.



### Spread the Word!

The federal earned income tax credit (EITC) has been of enormous benefit to working families for many years. However, there are still some who may not be aware of this tax credit and how it could help them. The IRS has special web pages devoted to explaining EITC and providing an outreach toolkit for how to spread the word to low-income families. See [IRS EITC](#) for more info.

Next week the Senate Budget Committee is expected to wrap up work on the fiscal year 2017 state budget. The MCC is tracking funding for several programs, including alternatives to abortion services, refugee resettlement assistance, and father responsibility initiatives. Visit their [website](#) for details.

### Maryknoll Sisters

Maryknoll Sisters give witness to

**Community Missions Corporation**

**Faith in Action**

**Family United Transportation Service**

**Holy Rosary Credit Union**

**Jerusalem Farm**

**Mother's Refuge**

**North Central Missouri Business Facilitation**

**Platte City Chaplain Emergency Assistance Fund**

**Redemptorist Social Service Center**

**Sisters of St. Francis - NW MO Enterprise Facilitation**

God's love and devote our lives in service overseas. As nurses, doctors, teachers, theologians, social workers, environmentalists and more, they serve the needs of the people - the poor, the ailing and the marginalized.



### **European Christian Refugee Crisis**



[Click here](#)

to learn what you can do

For four years a bloody civil war has wracked Syria. The estimated death toll has exceeded 220,000. Over four million Syrians have fled their country. Imagine a population almost the size of Missouri trying to escape beheadings and shootings to find a new home.

[Read more about the origins of the Syrian Refugee Crisis](#)

## **SAVE THESE DATES!**



### **OUTPACE POVERTY**

Do you want to OUTPACE POVERTY?!

You can make a difference - one step at a time. Join your community and Catholic Charities for Outpace Poverty 2016 as we take steps together - as a community - to raise awareness and funds to fight poverty in our neighborhoods.

Register Today!

Saturday, June 18, 2016

Liberty Memorial

100 West 26th Street, KCMO

### **PRISON/JAIL MINISTRY RETREAT**

The Human Rights Office is sponsoring a Retreat for members of the MAX Diocesan Prison/Jail Ministry. We look forward to gathering together in prayer and fellowship to reflect on the spirituality of prison and jail ministry. Lunch is included.

Mass to follow at 4:00pm.



### **TurnAround**

### **Community Re-entry**

#### **BE A MENTOR**

For former offenders, some of the toughest times they face occur after their sentence is served.

Thousands of men and women

Saturday, October 8  
St. Francis Xavier  
2618 Seneca, St. Joseph MO

### **IMMIGRATION CONFERENCE**

The Hispanic Ministry & Human Rights Offices are co-sponsoring an Immigration Conference of communion, education & advocacy for human dignity. The day of fellowship includes workshops, food and Mass at Redemptorist Parish.

Saturday, October 15  
Cristo Rey High School  
211 Linwood Blvd, KCMO



Lobby Day - April 12

Lobby Day Alert - MADP asks that you join with NAACP and MADP as they come together for a Lobby Day at the Capitol dealing with Racial Justice and the Death Penalty.



On Tuesday, February 16, The Writers Place and the Johnson County Library presented *Poetry and Prose*, a poetry reading by inmates incarcerated at Lansing Prison. Their next reading is scheduled for Thursday, November 17. See you there!



are released from Missouri prisons each year without jobs, homes or a support system. Without help, many will end up back behind bars.

When you volunteer as a mentor with Catholic Charities' TurnAround program, you provide vital support that helps clients stay positive and productive. When they succeed, lives and communities are transformed.

For more information send an **email** or call (816) 659-8234.

### **Thank You!**



Our community changed lives this Lent, and CRS Rice Bowl wants to say THANK YOU!!

### **CONTACT US**

#### **Laurie Jo Holmes**

Program Coordinator  
Human Rights Office

#### **Teresa Hoepfner**

Program Coordinator  
Project Rachel

#### **Miguel Salazar**

Director  
Hispanic Ministry

#### **Bill Francis**



[www.humanrightskcsj.org](http://www.humanrightskcsj.org)

"And the king will say to them in reply,,  
'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one  
of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'"  
~Matthew 25:40

**Human Rights Office**  
**Diocese of Kansas City-St.**  
**Joseph**



Blessed Mother  
Teresa, Pray for Us.