“A Special Place in Heaven”
Jan Wieser, Director of Catholic Charities’ Guardian/Conservator Program, offers a glimpse of the impact her program has on those it serves.

I’m often asked, “What is a guardian?!” Simply put, a guardian is someone who has been given by the court legal authority to make some or all personal decisions for an individual who is unable to do so because of an injury, illness or disability. The decisions we make on behalf of a client’s wellbeing aren’t always welcomed or embraced. Even so, serving as a guardian is certainly a privilege and can be quite fulfilling, as shown below.

We serve a 72-year old gentleman who suffers from mental illness and significant cognitive deficits following a stroke. When we were appointed his guardian, there was no record of any kin whatsoever. Our gentleman’s foster care provider discovered a lead and, as his guardian, we were able to locate our client’s one and only sister and an uncle, half the country away. The uncle stated that he hadn’t seen his nephew in 48 years!

It was incredibly humbling to be part of the reunion between our client and his sister and uncle. It was an emotional but heartfelt visit. In a letter, our client’s uncle stated “I believe (my nephew) is indeed fortunate to be in the care of Catholic Charities. You people deserve a special place in heaven.”

Krutsch Takes the Helm of Counseling Program
She shares her vision of the program’s goal
Replaces long-time employee, John McGuire, who retired on June 30th

After 10 years as a member of our counseling staff, Annette Krutsch, PhD, LP has also stepped into the role of Program Director for Individual and Family Counseling effective July 1, 2018.

“My goal is to continue to support our excellent professional staff in the provision of mental health services, and I am so excited that we are now able to meet a previously unmet need by providing psychiatric assessments and medications. Our program aims to strengthen families and promote physical, social, emotional, and spiritual health and well being for all, regardless of age, ethnic/cultural background, faith/non-faith tradition, or economic circumstance. We believe that when we help people to gain understanding and skills with which to cope with life’s struggles, we enable them to lead more productive and satisfying lives that in turn positively impact all those with whom their lives intersect.”

Annette is also working to enhance our Project Rachel program, designed to promote and support healing for those who have been touched by abortion.

Dr. Krutsch received her Bachelor’s degree from the University of Detroit, and her Doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology from Bowling Green State University in Ohio. She is a Licensed Psychologist in the state of Minnesota.
MARY’S KITCHEN TABLE
Mary Alessio, Director of Advancement answers questions around Mary’s Kitchen Table.

Today’s Kitchen Corner question is a “Double Decker” . . . . .

What do I feel motivates Spirit Circle donors to give to Catholic Charities? And, why do I personalize notes of thanks to all donors?

I really love these questions! I’ve had the honor and privilege to communicate with many Spirit Circle members over the years. The pattern I see is that their acts of compassion and generosity spring from a heart of gratitude. They believe that God grants them the opportunity to bless others as they have been blessed.

I remember several conversations with my parents and brothers on this topic. Mom and Dad reminded us that we were instruments of God’s love and that we were to share our blessings. As I grew, it became apparent to me that a strong society takes care of its weakest members. I saw it in our family when one sibling was in need and another came to the rescue. It was a “given” that when we were, once again, strong we would, in turn, help someone else in need. It was always about expressing our gratitude to God for our blessings in life.

You may find it interesting to know that over 40 research studies on gratitude (http://happierhuman.com/benefits-of-gratitude) determined that starting each day with a spirit of gratitude had these results: 16% fewer physical symptoms, 19% more time spent exercising, 10% less physical pain, 8% more sleep, and 25% increased sleep quality! The benefits of gratitude are illustrated in the chart shown below.

Turning to the second question, an attitude of gratitude is what compels me to write a few sentences to each donor, regardless of the size of the gift. I am mindful of the story of the widow’s mite where her modest gift had great significance because it selflessly came from her want, not her surplus (Mk 12:41-44).

Also, I don’t believe my notes of thanks should include an additional “ask. It’s just not me. My focus of concentration, when I write a hand-written note, is on you and your act of compassionate generosity—nothing more. The notes cost pennies, but the message, I believe, is priceless!

Sending you my heartfelt thanks for your compassionate, generous and grateful heart!