

Parish shares \$11,000 with five charities

At the end of 2015, after the parish had paid all its bills, there was \$1,500 left over for the Parish Council to distribute to charity. And so \$500 each was sent to Open Arms Food Pantry, to Heart House, and to Weekend Snack Pack.

Thanks to God's blessing, at the end of 2016 there was \$11,000 to distribute, a 633 percent increase. The Parish Council then adopted two policies and selected five charities.

First, as a matter of policy, the donations be used strictly for Acts of Corporal Mercy (feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, etc.), in other words, the basic needs of humanity as taught by Christ.

Second, as a matter of policy, the donations go to frontline charities that can vouch for or verify the needs of their clients.

Third, the money be distributed to these five:

\$3,000 to Open Arms Food Pantry (*a Christian-based food pantry in Metamora*).

\$3,000 to Heart House (*a faith-based charity in Eureka that provides emergency shelter for women and their children; financial aid and education; community and resource referrals; and basic essentials to residents of Woodford County who find themselves homeless, victims of domestic violence, or in any other crisis situation.*)

\$3,000 to Weekend SnackPac (*the local chapter of a national organization that provides weekend meal packages to children who qualify for reduced prices school lunches but often go hungry on weekends.*)

\$1,000 to Neighborhood House (*a Peoria-based, 120-year-old charity that serves the poorest of the poor, especially children and seniors, with food and housing, plus 28 others services.*)

\$1,000 to Journal Star Christmas Fund (*a non-profit corporation that works with the Salvation Army to raise money and awareness and to distribute Christmas toys and food to needy families in the Peoria area, including Woodford County.*)

The money was distributed before Christmas along with a letter explaining the origin of the gifts, offering encouragement for their continued good works and cautioning them that this should be considered a one-time gift that won't necessarily be replicated.