

COVID 19: Moving toward recovery

*A message from the Executive Director,
Richard Ducatzenzeiler*



Writing this message, I am feeling hopeful and grateful!

Hopeful that we are moving toward the other side of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this global healthcare crisis, we have all been diligently working together for the increased safety of our guests who are disproportionately susceptible to contracting the virus. We put protective measures in place to minimize the risk of infection and transmission of the illness at all our locations and acquired a cutting-edge rapid testing machine that allows us to detect positive results in as little as twenty minutes. In an effort to increase social distancing to reduce the risk of exposure, we installed adjustable wall partitions at the largest of our three

shelters. Our shelters are operating 24 hours a day, seven days per week. All these measures, along with the unwavering dedication of our leadership, donors, community partners and staff, allow us to provide essential services that save lives.

Our most exciting news, as we move toward recovery, is that all our guests and staff, who chose to, received the first dose of the Moderna vaccine at the end of January. The second dose is scheduled to be distributed later this month. Many thanks to our partners, Lawndale Christian Health Center and the Chicago Department of Public Health, that aligned with us to make this important next step happen! The vaccine is an additional tool as we continue to fight the pandemic and ensure the wellbeing and care of our guests. We will remain cognizant of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines to mask up, keep social distance, and often practice hand washing.



Love comes in many different forms
and Franciscan Outreach invites you
to show your love...

**Make a donation in February in
honor of a loved one.**

Grateful for the outpouring of support Franciscan Outreach has received from all corners. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and fills us with the hope and energy we need to continue our work. Despite the challenges we faced together in 2020, I am proud to say that we are united in our mission to provide healthy meals, safe shelter, and compassionate care that affirms the dignity of men and women who are confronting homelessness; and strong in our vision to ensure a positive path forward for people who are marginalized and homeless so they can gain stability and thrive in permanent housing.

Since 1976, February has been officially recognized as Black History month and an opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our country's history. At Franciscan Outreach, we are especially aware of the unfair disparities our guests of color face and it is our duty to address and work to correct these inequities. As Executive Director, I pledge to expand Franciscan Outreach's work to address racial inclusion, diversity, equity, and access in our community and take action against broader inequities that exist in Chicago. With the formation of an Equity Task Force, this group and its ability to continuously foster equity through the coordinated efforts of our programs, our community and our guests, is an important step to ensuring that the dialogue we have on equity is not only productive, but lasting.

We are especially grateful that you have joined us to serve the many women and men experiencing homelessness. And, we are hopeful that you will continue to be part of our mission and work

With appreciation,
Richard

Black History Month



Franciscan Outreach is grateful to the many African American champions against poverty and homelessness whose work came before us, groundbreakers like Shirley Chisholm.

Chisholm was the first Black woman in Congress (1968) and the first woman and African American to seek the nomination for President of the United States from one of the two major political parties in 1972. Chisholm said, "I ran for the presidency, despite hopeless odds, to demonstrate the sheer will and refusal to

accept the status quo. The next time a woman runs, or a Black, or a Jew or anyone from a group that the country is 'not ready' to elect to its highest office, I believe that he or she will be taken seriously from the start...I ran because somebody had to do it first."

She was leader on anti-poverty and education reform policy and sponsored numerous health, education, childcare, and employment focused bills. Serving as a member of the House Subcommittee on Equal Opportunity, she was part of the fight to save the Office of Economic Opportunity and preserve the Economic Opportunity Act, which established the Community Action network and would eventually become the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) that we know today. Chisholm paved the way for women of color in US politics and is one of the giants whose shoulders Vice President Harris says she stands upon.

By shattering what has since become known as the glass ceiling, Shirley Chisholm opened doors and dreams for Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett, who, today, we can thank for the

COVID 19 vaccine. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) since 1984 and chief medical advisor to President Biden since 2021, said in March 2020, "The vaccine you are going to be taking was developed by an African American woman and that is just a fact."

Corbett's team took the knowledge they gained in six years of research, applied it to a platform in collaboration with Moderna, and the vaccine rolled out 10 months later with an impressive 95% effectiveness rate. Corbett's understanding of the socio-cultural issues and her expertise in science has made her an influential person in the scientific community. In a time where vaccine skepticism is high among African Americans, Corbett hopes Black people will put faith in the vaccine and in the scientists who worked to bring it to the American people. "Number one is that I get it. And then number two is to really take advantage of the level of transparency that we are attempting....even I haven't even seen before, such as FDA [Food and Drug Administration] hearings and briefings being broadcast online, and data is coming out almost instantly," Corbett said.



For information about Black History every day, please see this [website](#) for great information!

And, just at the moment when someone says, "There, he is gone," there are other eyes watching him coming, and other voices ready to take up the glad shout, "Here he comes!" -Henry Van Dyke

The dictionary definition of "legacy" does not begin to describe the breadth of the word. To create a lifelong legacy requires goodness, selflessness, generosity, service, and embracing the joy in all of it!



[Philip Doran, Sr.](#)



[Deacon Raymond Behrendt](#)

When Philip and Raymond were called home last year, Franciscan Outreach lost two beloved friends.

Although their backgrounds, daily lives, and personalities were unique, both shared the same characteristic spirit: the belief in the dignity and worth of all life and the ability to give easily. They left us with a beautiful legacy to carry on. Keep them alive in your hearts, in your deeds, in your actions.

A heartfelt thanks to the many individuals who made honorary or memorial donations last year. We are grateful to be the recipient of such meaningful gifts.



Franciscan Outreach paid tribute to all who passed while experiencing homelessness.

Although this year's Annual Homeless Person's [Memorial](#) was virtual, it resounded the message that all life is precious. Please take a moment to remember those we have lost this year and the gift they were to our community.

