



# BECAUSE *we are* CATHOLIC

## Calvert County Parish Pivotal In Fundraising Efforts For Local Homeless Shelter

In 1992, the Ecumenical Council of Calvert County formed a task force to address the county's growing problem of homelessness. Project ECHO opened a year later and the homeless shelter has now been serving men, women, and children in the area for 25 years.

One of the biggest fundraising events for the shelter is the annual Empty Bowl Supper. A national movement started in California, Empty Bowl Suppers include a meal with the purchase of a handmade bowl with 100 percent of the proceeds donated to the local homeless shelter.

All the bowls for the Calvert County event are made at Jesus the Good Shepherd in Owings, one of five Catholic parishes in the county and the only one with an adult art studio featuring two kilns. The 18th Empty Bowl Supper will take place in April at St. John Vianney parish in Prince Frederick.

"It has become a huge county-wide event," said Jesus the Good Shepherd pastor Fr. Michael King. "The event keeps growing. It is fun. There is now a silent auction with wonderful gifts donated by local businesses. It is one of the largest fundraisers in Calvert County."

Jesus the Good Shepherd's wing with a dedicated art studio, built 10 years ago, was made possible through the generosity of the Doran Foundation. John and Jean Doran provided grants for the construction of parish centers for cultural and athletic activities for youth to many Catholic churches and schools in Southern Maryland.

"The great work being done for Project ECHO would not be possible without the initial financial generosity of the Doran Foundation," Fr. King explained. "It was through their generosity that both Jesus the Good Shepherd and St.

John Vianney were enabled to create physical spaces to do the fundraising for this event."

Kathy Chow is one of the more than 20 Jesus the Good Shepherd parishioners who craft the bowls for the fundraiser. She indicated that each person is targeting to create between 25-30 bowls this year for a total of 600, up 100 from previous years.

"We start right after Christmas," Chow said. "We call it our 'Empty Bowl Throw Down'. There is a spiritual aspect to giving back. I feel like I am using the talents that I have been given to do something. It isn't just about writing a check. I wanted to get more involved. Since starting Empty Bowl 14 years ago, I have been doing three or four other things at the homeless shelter. I run into others from Jesus the Good Shepherd who are doing the same thing. It is just a good feeling seeing other people from the parish involved and caring."

For \$25, Project ECHO's Empty Bowl Supper includes the handcrafted bowls with local food and live entertainment.



*A table is filled with handmade pottery bowls at Jesus the Good Shepherd in Owings. For the last decade, bowls for Project ECHO's Empty Bowl Supper in Calvert County have been handcrafted at the parish.*

"One of the things about Empty Bowl that impresses me is this is such a large community event," added Chow. "All Saints is an Episcopal church. They have a band and provide the entertainment. The pastor, Ken Phelps, plays lead guitar and sings. Elementary school students from various schools make the place mats to put on the tables. I think it is one of the most impressive things that comes out of Calvert County, besides the steamed crabs."

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