



ST. ELIZABETH | COLEMAN  
PREGNANCY & ADOPTION SERVICES

2500 Churchman Avenue • Indianapolis, IN 46203  
(317) 787-3412 • GivingBirthToHope.org

Services of Catholic Charities in Indianapolis



Community Partner



ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS  
*The Church in Central and Southern Indiana*

Keep up with the latest happenings at St. Elizabeth | Coleman! Sign up for our eNewsletters on our website: [GivingBirthToHope.org](http://GivingBirthToHope.org).

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Spring 2019 Newsletter



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## THE VALUE OF “BRING HARMONY TO CREATION”



Pope Francis, in a morning meditation on February 9, 2017, in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, said that women are “the great gift of God”, able to “bring harmony to creation...I like to think that God created woman so that all of us would have a mother...it is she who brings that harmony that teaches us to care, to love tenderly and who makes of the world something beautiful.”

The staff of St. Elizabeth | Coleman could not agree with his Holiness more. We see the characteristics of women that Pope Francis mentioned above.

Among the stories featured in these pages, you'll hear from women and families who experienced the care of St. Elizabeth | Coleman with various life circumstances. Included among them is a 24-year old woman who celebrated a successful completion of a Liberian adoption; how a young mother's participation in a parent support group helped her confidence; and how the generosity of our donors provided 34 families with Christmas assistance. The women and children we help come from different beginnings and had been thrown into unexpected circumstances. By finding help at St. Elizabeth | Coleman, the women and families we serve can get the personalized assistance they needed to step forward with the right foot.

I am thankful for the work we continue to do, and for the ability to serve our community with the trust that is granted to our staff and volunteers. There are so many voices with stories to tell—from the women, children and the men in our midst—and it is an honor to give an amplified voice to those who have previously been silent.

Your generous support to St. Elizabeth | Coleman strengthens our unwavering commitment that all members of our community deserve access to the highest quality of social service programs – that yield extraordinary outcomes – regardless of their socio-economic status, religious background, heritage or prior traumatic life experiences. I am grateful to acknowledge your generosity and kindness. Have a blessed Easter Season.

Sincerely,

David J. Bethuram, MA, M.Min., CFLE  
Executive Director  
Secretariat for Catholic Charities  
Archdiocese of Indianapolis

### SAVE THE DATE: UPCOMING AGENCY EVENTS

#### 9th Annual Birthmother Luncheon - May 11, 2019

It is our privilege to host the annual Birthmother Luncheon, which honors and celebrates clients that have placed a child for adoption with St. Elizabeth's, Coleman Adoption Services or St. Elizabeth | Coleman.

#### Join us: 18th Annual Golf Scramble supporting St. Elizabeth | Coleman - June 23, 2019

Register online for the annual Bob Coffman Memorial Golf Scramble at Bluff Creek Golf Course: [www.givingbirthtohope.org](http://www.givingbirthtohope.org)  
Can't attend? Hole Sponsorships are available!

Proceeds of this scramble benefit our agency's Pregnancy, Adoption & Parenting Programs, St. Francis & Clare School and the Parkinson's Foundation. Hole Sponsorships directly benefit SEC. We appreciate the support of our golfers and hole sponsors.

#### Transracial / Transcultural Adoption Seminar - May 18, 2019

This 5-hour training at St. Elizabeth | Coleman will provide you with the tools to help your child feel comfortable with himself and his cultural identity. We will openly discuss racism, prejudice and similar topics. We will share suggestions on how to respond to difficult situations and how to empower your child to do the same. This training includes a panel of interracial families and a panel of adult adoptees. For more information, contact Jennifer Bigelow at [jbigelow@secindy.org](mailto:jbigelow@secindy.org).

### OVERVIEW OF AVAILABLE SERVICES

**Full-Service Birthparent Services** – provides counseling to work through parenting or adoption services with ongoing post-placement counseling: Birthmother Support Group and Parent Support Group

**Adoption Services** – provides homestudies, adoption preparation and post-placement services for domestic adoptions as well as domestic adoption placement. Provides homestudies for step-parent, relative and International Adoptions.

**Transracial/Transcultural Training** – workshop that prepares and educates adoptive couples on issues associated with adopting a child of another race or nationality

**Adoption Search Services** – provides helpful and accurate information about the Indiana Adoption Registry to birthparents and adoptees as well as counseling and guidance when a birthparent or adoptee is interested in locating the other party

**Donations Services** – provides mothers and families with basic needs for their infants and children as well as support group mothers with basic household items and infant and children necessities.

### ONGOING DONATION REQUESTS

- Diapers Size 1, 2, 5 and 6
- Infant Toiletries
- Infant Sleepers
- Infant and Toddler Clothing
- Paper Towels
- All Purpose Cleaner
- Kleenex
- Personal Hygiene Products (pads, tampons, body wash, shampoo, etc.)

For a longer list of wish list items, please visit our website: [www.GivingBirthToHope.org](http://www.GivingBirthToHope.org)

### NEW CHANGES HAPPENING AT SEC

In January 2019, St. Elizabeth | Coleman launched a strategic marketing initiative involving new techniques and efforts to reach more potential clients and educate more community members about our exceptional programs and services. This initiative began with a newly designed website with an easier-to-read layout and content. In addition, to meet the needs of expectant women considering adoption, we've created attractive online profiles of our current Waiting Families hoping to adopt domestically. These profiles are located on our website and our social media channels (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter). The goal is for expectant clients to find our agency more easily on the Internet and therefore increase opportunities for our waiting families. In the few short months since the inception of this marketing plan, the agency has seen a drastic increase in clients contacting our agency. Just like spring season holds the promise of new beginnings, these marketing efforts hold the promise of wonderful changes for our waiting families longing to be parents.

## WELCOME HOME!

“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Hebrews 4:16 NIV

As we enter this new season, we rejoice in all that spring represents: emerging hope and the anticipation of new beginnings. This season, the International Adoption team celebrated the successful completion of a Liberian adoption. This story is a testimony to God’s greatness and His ability to make all things possible. Meet Makalya (Konah) and Makenzie (Youhn) and their mother, Mahnbuah. This is their faithful adoption story.

Mahnbuah was born in Liberia, Africa and after many years of unrest in her country, she decided to move to the United States when she was 24 years old. She established her life here, and in 2011, she went back to Liberia on a mission trip. As she made her way to the restroom, she noticed some children gathered around a tree. She approached the group of children, ages 11 to 6 years old, and she asked them their names.

Mahnbuah described that when one of the children looked up at her she saw the face of her uncle. Indeed, the children were her cousins. They were hungry and poorly cared for, but resilient 6-year-old twin girls. She could not believe these were her family members, and she was determined to support them in whatever way she could. Mahnbuah came home from her trip and began researching international adoption and how she might bring them home. She adopted the girls in Liberia in 2011 and monetarily supported them while they remained in their country. The next step was to complete the adoption process in the United States, so they could come home.

In September of 2012, I met with Mahnbuah for the first time. We had never completed a Liberian adoption at St. Elizabeth | Coleman, but I prayed a very specific prayer request that day. I prayed that if it was His will, it would be done to completion. I requested the assistance of Tim Winn, Director of Immigration Legal Services of Catholic Charities Indianapolis to assist us with the legal process. There were many unknowns, barriers and procedures that seemed too large to conquer in the days ahead of us. There were governmental delays and unexpected legal processes that needed to be accomplished. There was paperwork and more paperwork. There was a time in 2013 when the Liberian government closed adoption to the United States all together. There were many moments that felt like this would be a fruitless process. There were also many times that God needed to answer our challenges with specific resources, and He provided answers at each passage. Mahnbuah was also steadfast in her faith that God would see this to fruition. Through all of the hardships the decision continued to be... “press on.”

In June of 2018 (almost 7 years after Mahnbuah met the girls under the tree), they arrived at their forever home. For Makalya and Makenzie, this will be a year of new beginnings and many “firsts”. As we head into the spring season, let this story be a reminder that He makes all things new again... “Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.” Psalm 115:1 NIV.



## WELCOME SHAMIA!

### A NEW ADDITION TO OUR ADOPTION TEAM

Shamia joined St. Elizabeth | Coleman in November 2018 as our Search & Reunion Specialist. She brings personal and extensive professional adoption experience to this position, which makes her the perfect fit for our team. In her role, she assists adult adoptees and birth parents with searches, reunifications and provides counseling throughout the process.



## PARENT SUPPORT GROUP SPARKS HOPE

Ruby first heard about the monthly Parent Support Group at St. Elizabeth | Coleman from a friend. At that time, Ruby was struggling financially and felt overwhelmed parenting her three young children. She was excited to join the Support Group. At each meeting, group members are presented with a parenting topic, such as child development stages, budgeting,

education and job search, goal setting and meal planning. At the end of each meeting, the women receive material assistance, which may include: diapers/wipes, children’s clothing, toiletries, laundry soap and cleaning products. Ruby attended the Support Group for a year and a half. When she graduated from group, she felt more self-sufficient and independent. Ruby said she is

very thankful for the Parent Support Group. She appreciates the various things she learned, the material assistance she received and the care that was shown to the group members. Because of her fantastic experience, she now enjoys telling other women in the community about our agency’s support group.

## VOLUNTEER SNAP-SHOTS

**Roncalli High School Pro-Life Group** - For the past 5 years, the Roncalli Pro-Life Group has come once a month after school to help our agency. This group of students brings energy, a positive attitude and motivation every single time. They sort donated clothing, toys and layette items. They also enjoy decorating our building for the holidays. We are thankful for their continued assistance and long-term commitment.

**Grace** - Grace is in her sixth year as a weekly volunteer at St. Elizabeth | Coleman. Grace enjoys staying busy and volunteering in the community. She is actively involved at the St. Francis Hospital Auxiliary and at St. Roch Catholic Church in Indianapolis. At St. Elizabeth | Coleman, Grace enjoys preparing newborn layettes (a set of clothing, diapers, wipes, toiletries) and sorting donated children’s clothing. Grace chose to volunteer at St. Elizabeth | Coleman because she wanted to support a Pro-Life Ministry by helping women and children in need. She says, “It is important for women to know that they are not alone, someone cares.”



Roncalli High School Pro-Life Group



Grace

## CHRISTMAS GIFT PROGRAM

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, 26 families with 70 children were able to celebrate Christmas with gifts this past year. Your donations have made a direct impact on our clients and we feel honored to have the opportunity to brighten the spirits of our clients during the holiday season. To see a complete list of our donors, please visit our website. We appreciate the commitment of our dedicated supporters at Christmas time and year-round.

“I truly am thankful for the gifts and your giving heart. We are really blessed to have people like you”

## THE IMPACT OF OUR SERVICES: 2017-2018 YEAR IN REVIEW

As the staff of Catholic Charities Indianapolis, we are called by the Gospel to uphold the dignity of all people. Guided by Catholic Social teaching, we consider it a privilege to deliver compassionate and caring service to help and empower those in need.

Our services benefited **5,449 people** both directly and indirectly.



Provided pregnancy and adoption counseling to **168 women**

Helped **76 families** with adoption placements

Received **543 Adoption Search Inquiries** of which **39 searches** were completed

Educated **1,420 people** about adoption and available services

**275 mothers** and **431 children** received basic needs items through the Donation Program