



Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation Inc

P. O Box 831 - New Albany, IN 47151-0831

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Attorney

09/24/2020

NOVEMBER 2020

Greetings to our Friends and Supporters,

The year of the 2020 pandemic has been a difficult and challenging time for everyone and we trust this letter finds you safe with the hope that very soon the days of social distancing, masks, and forced isolation will be in the past.

The services of the CRBFI board are many, and traditionally our message has provided details of the many events and activities throughout the year. This letter attempts to shine the light on some of the activities sponsored by our Community Outreach group followed by some important tenant news.

Social Justice and Ecumenism:

In 1937 as Bishop of Indianapolis, and in 1947 as Archbishop of St Louis, Cardinal Ritter desegregated the Catholic schools and proclaimed "...the equality of every soul before Almighty God."

As civil unrest and protests for social change erupted across the county, the CRBFI engaged with several local faith-based leaders to seek peace, and prayers for actions to unite diverse communities. With a Statement of Unity endorsed by over 20 local churches, an Ecumenical Prayer Vigil was held at the foot of the Town Clock Church in September. From that event, the New Albany Ecumenical Association of Churches (NAEAC) has been newly formed and will meet regularly to seek ways to address racial and social issues within the community. The CRBFI has played a leadership role in facilitating the new organization, and recently hosted the inaugural roundtable for discussion. We look forward to providing more details and events soon from this important ecumenical ministry in the New Albany community.

(visit www.cardinalritterhouse.org/media for local print media coverage)

Community Education:

A stated goal for the CRBFI is to be a resource in advancing community awareness of the life and works of Cardinal Ritter. The in-house Cardinal Ritter Museum portrays a timeline of Cardinal Ritters prominent events with personal and group tours available upon request. Our 2020 initiative is to combine the efforts of our Community Outreach and Museum Committees to further develop materials for an expanded educational experience for the local elementary schools and other interested organizations. These materials will include video presentations and educational handouts. Thru field trips to the CRH, or on-site presentations at the schools, we will be educating our youth of the advancement of racial equality by Cardinal Ritter and others such as Lucy Higgs Nichols, Sherman Minton, and featuring historical sites such as The Town Clock Church, Division Street School. and Freedomland Cemetery in New Albany.

2020 Tenant News:

The CRBFI is not immune to the widespread effects of the pandemic as our primary tenant, the Home of the Innocents, has been unable to provide programs since March. *The extended closure has led to a recent very difficult decision to permanently terminate most of the programs provided at the Cardinal Ritter House by the end of the year, with all services being eliminated sometime in early 2021.* Obviously, this is very difficult for the employees of the Home of the Innocents, but equally a loss of invaluable programs and services to the vulnerable children and families of the community. It is with great sadness the Cardinal Ritter House will not have the presence of the Home of the Innocents as the services were offered with love and compassion exemplified in the spirit of Cardinal Ritter. We will immediately attempt to replace the vacated space as soon as possible as the obvious loss of rental income will greatly impact our day to day operations.

Board News:

I am continually amazed by the dedication and offering of time and talents by our all-volunteer board of directors, and numerous friends of the board. Please welcome new directors, Fr. Steve Banet, and Julio Arauz, and returning for a second tour, Mark Lods. All on the board should be recognized, and limited space will not allow it, but I would be remiss to not recognize, if only briefly, the efforts and deeds of David Hock. Assisting in the role of Vice Chair this term, David has been the Chair of the CRBFI from its inception and a driving force to save the condemned structure even before there was a board. As our voice and conscience, David has led this Foundation to be the thriving impactful organization in our community which it is today. We are grateful for his past service, which we hope will continue for many years to come. Thank you, David!

Support:

In closing this year-end message, I wish to thank you for your continued support over the years. These are challenging times, so if you can support us with a charitable gift, we would be extremely grateful. Your donation will provide the funding to support our Community Outreach programs and offset the cost of our video presentations for our 2020 Community Education initiative.

Contributions can be made via: Pay Pal account: <http://www.cardinalritterhouse.org/support/>

Send a check via mail: Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation PO Box 831, New Albany, IN 47150-0831

The 2020 Cares Act increases the non-itemized tax-deductible contributions for individuals up to \$300.00 and \$600.00 if filing jointly. Please consult with your tax attorney for details.

As a believer in the power of prayer, let us pray for each other, our country and family and friends.

Cardinal Ritter, America again needs your wisdom, your courage, and your guidance. Today we implore your help to bring fairness, equality, and civility to our nation. Instill in each of us the compassion and understanding necessary to bring, as you often said, "equality of every soul before Almighty God." Intercede for us to the Father, that He will grant us healing and answer our plea with peace. Amen.

Sincerely,

Fred Ernstberger

Chair, Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation, Inc.