



Divine Mercy Care

Transforming Hearts Through Healthcare™



Annual Report **2020**



Divine Mercy Care

Transforming Hearts Through Healthcare™

Divine Mercy Care (DMC) is a non-profit umbrella organization whose mission is to advance pro-life healthcare through programs that serve those in need and that educate and inspire caregivers and medical professionals. We raise funds to provide charity care at Tepeyac OB/GYN and aspire to ensure that all women have access to the life-affirming care they deserve.



Tepeyac OB/GYN

Something More Than Medicine™

Tepeyac OB/GYN's mission is to restore the integrity of the human person by combining the best of modern medicine with the healing presence of Jesus Christ.

We treat all patients as individuals wholly in body, soul, and spirit. We integrate the family into the treatment of our patients because one builds on the other, and this is healthy for society. We cooperate with fertility because it is a natural, healthy function, and not a disease to be repressed. We recognize that children are gifts, and therefore joys. We affirm your children in their dignity as temples of the Holy Spirit, encouraging healthy opportunities in physical, emotional, and spiritual growth. We welcome all patients, including the physically, emotionally, spiritually or financially underserved.

2020.

It was indeed a year like no other. The pandemic challenged all of us — physically, emotionally, and spiritually. It demanded that every person face profound questions about the value of human life and about how best to protect the most vulnerable lives in our society. For us at Tepeyac OB/GYN and Divine Mercy Care, protecting the most vulnerable among us has always been at the center of our mission. So, while so much shut down in 2020, we persevered.

During this epic year, Tepeyac continued its committed service. With fear and economic uncertainty high due to the COVID-19 outbreak, our appointments declined more than 17 percent. We saw fewer women and delivered fewer babies in 2020. Still, in 2020 Divine Mercy Care provided funds to assist 220 charity care patients. Tepeyac delivered 63 babies to women who might have otherwise chosen abortion. I am so grateful to Dr. Fisk, Dr. Cvetkovich, Dr. Muldoon, Dr. Pereira and our midwife, Kim Terhune, and all of our staff, for their sacrifices and commitment to practicing excellent medicine and seeing the poor — every single day — especially during this arduous and uncertain time.



Now, in the midst of 2021, I am turning attention to completing my conversion story, which will allow me to share how my heart was transformed to life-affirming medicine, and God-willing, help to inspire the next generation of pro-life doctors. This year, the Pro-Women's Healthcare Centers (PWHC) program Divine Mercy Care helped to create and grow has become its own 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and we are proud to continue to partner with PWHC to define excellence in women's healthcare. Our Pregnancy and Life Assistance Network (PLAN) program, aimed at facilitating collaboration among organizations that support women's needs, was adopted by Susan B. Anthony List and is led by DMC's own Chaney Mullins — who is newlywed and now Mrs. Chaney Gooley! We wish her the best in her new life adventure.

Finally, this year we said farewell to Will Waldron, who served as DMC Executive Director for five years. Two members of the Divine Mercy Care Board of Directors, Kathryn Doherty and Monique Baroudi, have taken on the management of DMC as volunteers. From a foundation of faith and service, these longtime patients have set ambitious goals for reaching more, serving more and saving more in 2021 with His grace, our servant heart. I am grateful to them for their leadership and passion for our mission.

As the pandemic lifts, I am also filled with gratitude for you. In these difficult times, the Divine Mercy Care family stepped up to financially support our mission. Your contributions have saved lives — this year perhaps more than ever.

Thank you for your prayers and know that you are in my prayers, always.

Under Her Mantle and His Mercy,

Life-Affirming Medicine at Tepeyac: **2020 at a Glance**



2,493

Patients



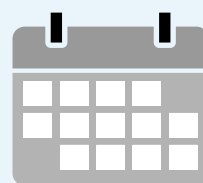
369

Deliveries



63

**Deliveries to
Women in Need**



10,750

**Total
Appointments**



55

**Infant Gift Baskets
Delivered to Families
in Need**



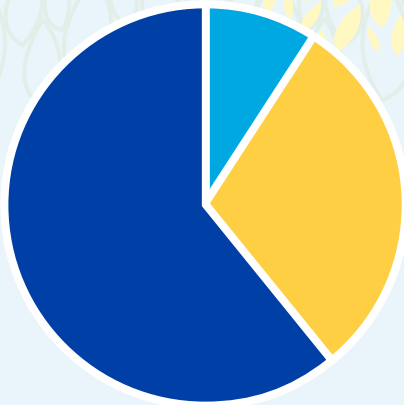
220

**Women Received
Financial Aid**

FUNDS RAISED BY DMC in 2020:

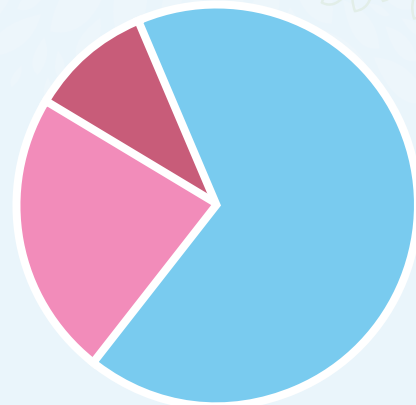
\$849,918

DMC Funds



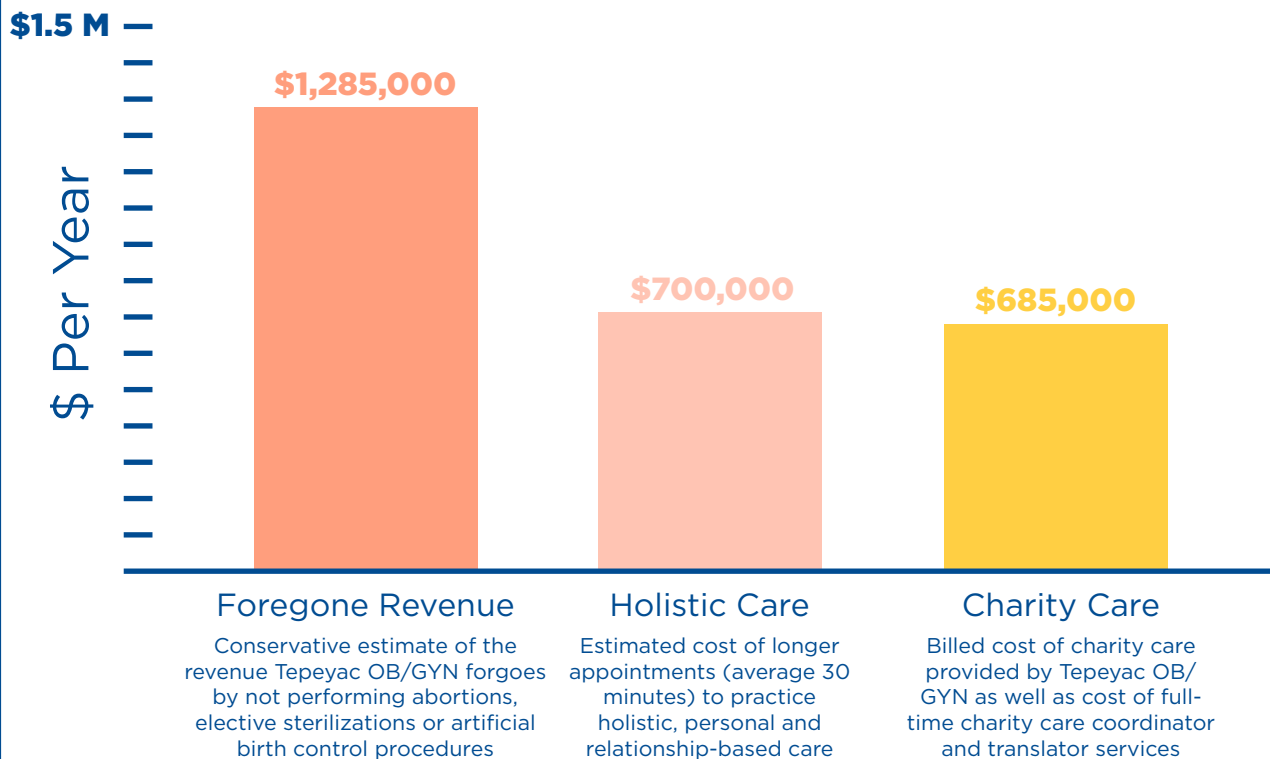
- 9% Pro-Women's Healthcare Centers (PWHC), Infant Loss Support, Education and Outreach Programs
- 30% Staff/Fundraising
- 61% Charity Care Funds for Tepeyac OB/GYN

Tepeyac Income Source



- 10% Hospital Pay
- 23% Charitable Donations
- 67% Patient/Private Insurance

The Cost of Pro-Life Medicine



Sources: DMC and Tepeyac OB/GYN financials, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Doctors and doulas help pregnant women deal with COVID-19 concerns

ASHLEIGH KASSOCK | For the Catholic Herald 4/21/21



Eight weeks before Samuel Aiden Pelletier was born by cesarean section April 29, 2020, he was oblivious to the fact that his mother was pregnant as a pandemic swept the globe. Nestled under Andie Pelletier's heart, he might have noticed a more rapid beat when his mom learned about the shutdowns, found out her delivery hospital in Haymarket was changing to Prince William Hospital in Manassas, or when she got her pre-delivery COVID-19 test. He did not know that his firefighter dad was now the family's only grocery shopper or that his siblings' neighborhood play dates were canceled indefinitely, all in an effort to keep him and his mom safe and healthy.

"Pregnancy does not take days off," said Dr. John Bruchalski, founder of Tepeyac OB/GYN and Divine Mercy Care in Fairfax. "It was as if an invisible earthquake hit. Nothing seemed to change around us but everything changed within us. The fear factor went up astronomically. We didn't know how contagious it was. Patients did not want to leave their (homes)."

Tepeyac provides health care services to families of all incomes who want a pro-life approach to

pregnancy. According to Bruchalski, the clinic responded to the pandemic by shutting down the office for a week and a half in March. It then reopened to low-risk patients, implemented cleaning and social distancing procedures, and arranged house calls for high-risk patients.

Some of those high-risk patients were between 20 and 40 women who contracted COVID-19.

"With COVID, it is an inflammatory response," said Bruchalski. "Most women do very well although other hospitals might be getting higher-risk cases. We just watch the baby early, like a high-risk pregnancy, and act early," he said, citing a recent example where the clinic induced a woman at 39 and a half weeks because she tested positive for COVID-19.

During a COVID-19-positive delivery, the medical team wears full protective coverings and after the delivery, the baby remains with the mother, according to Bruchalski.

While they have come a long way since the early days of the pandemic, Tepeyac is still seeing the effects of that anxiety.

“Some of the moms developed high blood pressure and diabetes,” said Bruchalski. “They were not coming to their appointments. As a result, we saw a rise in ... issues because of the lack of monitoring.”

For many other expectant mothers, the ever-changing hospital policies were another source of worry. Jennifer Woodhead, a doula and owner of a Mother’s Perspective Doula Services in Fredericksburg, noticed many women were worried about catching COVID-19 while in the hospitals and sought out birth centers or home births.

“The midwives were completely booked,” said Woodhead. When hospitals limited support persons, she and other doulas shifted to add virtual support offerings, built on extensive early education and real-time communication during delivery.

One client, Cynthia Dement, signed up for in-hospital support in mid-2020 when hospitals were starting to allow doulas and one other support person into delivery rooms. However, with the COVID-19 spike after Christmas, Mary Washington Hospital in Fredericksburg reverted to the one-person limit. In January, Dement texted her doula, Beverly Bouchard, when she went into labor. At the hospital, Bouchard was able to give Dement’s husband support over the phone by talking him through different ways to position his wife during labor. After three difficult hours, she delivered her baby girl, Blair, at 2:30 a.m. Jan. 26.

“Obviously physical support is super important, but even just having that extra person there virtually was so valuable to us,” said Dement.

While the development of COVID-19 vaccines has given hope to many that the return to normalcy is in sight, some pregnant women have questions about the vaccine.

“All of us at Tepeyac are encouraged by the latest small study in our American Journal of OBGYN showing that moms who received the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are making a large amount of antibodies to the virus; passing on those antibodies to their babies in their umbilical cord blood and in their breast milk, and are having no higher incidence of side effects than

nonpregnant women,” said Bruchalski. “With that said, this study is a very small sample size and will need to be repeated.”

Bruchalski suggested that when deciding to take the vaccine, Tepeyac encourages its patients to choose what is best for them based on their medical history, and the latest information and guidelines. With or without the vaccine, he said the clinic will continue to care for patients.

Frances Silva, a religion teacher at Saint John Paul the Great Catholic High School in Potomac Shores, married her husband, Nick, in July and now they are expecting a baby girl, Miriam Ruth, in May.



“This is our first so we don’t have anything to compare it to,” said Silva. “We were really surprised how seamless it has been with Tepeyac, which is pretty amazing. You go in quickly, find the form, wear masks.”

Since their jobs still take them outside the home, they depend on limited contacts and general best practices within the state mandates to keep safe. While there is still so much uncertainty, new parents like Frances and Nick are optimistic.

“You can’t put life on hold,” said Silva. “You have to take what you’ve been given and make the best of it.”

Kassock is a freelancer in Fredericksburg.



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