



Drugs had a hold of her daughter.
Dementia had a hold of her mother.
Depression had a hold of her granddaughter.

**“I had to be there for them.
I had to get a hold of myself!”**

Mental health can *make* or *break* a family.

YOU could make all the difference for an Idaho family in crisis this Christmas.

December 2025

I’m guessing you’d do *anything* for your family.

But sometimes you *just can’t*.

If a “perfect storm” overwhelms you ...if suddenly
“your cup is empty” ...you might need help yourself
before you can get back to helping others.



That’s how it is for too many Idaho families right now. They *need help* so they
can *be of help*.

Which is what Catholic Charities of Idaho is all about.

And it’s why I’m asking you today: **Will you please donate now to be there
for your Idaho neighbors in crisis?** Especially those who’ve always been the *very
heart of their family* and want nothing more than to get the support they need so they
can get right back to helping their loved ones.

I’m thinking about people like Dawn.

Dawn was doing just fine until a “perfect storm” of crisis overwhelmed her as
the holidays approached. The first signs of dark clouds on the horizon came with the

 *Over, please...*

news of her mother's dementia. Dawn left her home in Minnesota for Idaho, where she dropped everything to become her 97-year-old mother's full-time caretaker.

This was *plenty hard* enough on its own.

It meant cooking and cleaning and laundry and tending to bills. It meant trips to the doctor and sorting pills in pill boxes. It meant watching dementia slowly steal her mother's memories — her mother's whole world and her place in it.

To make this all somehow even worse for Dawn, she and her mother had never had a good relationship. She ached still, decades later, from childhood wounds. Yet here she was caring full-time for the woman who'd hurt her so deeply.

And her "perfect storm" was only beginning...

Please give today, if you can. No one can prevent life's "perfect storms," but your kindness can help people like Dawn recover as quickly as possible so all the loved ones who depend on them are not abandoned to their own storms.

Soon after her arrival in Idaho, more dark clouds gathered for Dawn.

Her daughter Janie's struggles with men had gotten her into a bad crowd and, eventually, drug abuse. As Dawn felt on edge from the stress of caretaking and missing the life she left behind in Minnesota, Janie was spiraling out of control.

Dawn had already raised her granddaughter Bella (because Janie couldn't). Now Bella was calling in tears, unable to keep a job, drowning in depression.

"I felt like I was failing *her* and *her mother* and *my mother*," Dawn says.

One day, while washing her mother's clothes, she was struck by a thought: "I wonder how many more times I'll wash her clothes before she's gone." Immediately followed by a rush of mixed emotions. **Grief** for the loss to come. **Relief** that this long, hard journey might end soon. Then **crushing guilt** for thinking such a thing.

Dawn felt a sinking feeling: the perfect storm was raging; the plane was going down; she had to put on her oxygen mask before helping others. It was the only way.



On page 3: how Dawn found help and why other Idaho neighbors need you now.

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When Dawn contacted Catholic Charities, we connected her with a counselor, Jodi. They would meet for over two years.

“Jodi was a lifesaver,” Dawn says. “If I hadn’t gone through counseling with her, I would’ve been a complete wreck. I wouldn’t have been able to function. I’m so grateful to this day. It makes me emotional.”

If you’ve ever had someone like Jodi in your life, you know how much God can do through another’s caring expertise. Jodi offered endless patience and perspective. She taught Dawn techniques for making mental shifts that bring calm amid chaos. She helped her develop new habits, insights, and understanding.

“*It worked. It’s amazing.* Jodi showed me how to be more gentle with and forgiving of my mother. Our last days together were wonderful. When Mom died, I was able to really be there for her. I felt strong. I felt at peace. Janie’s clean and sober now. Bella’s doing better too. *I’m so thankful I was able to keep it together for them.*”

Mental health can make or break a family.

You could be the difference.

Please make a special Advent gift to be the difference for an Idaho neighbor like Dawn who needs urgent help right now, even as the lights twinkle on the Christmas tree and the carols in the air promise joy to the world. You can connect a hurting family to the support they desperately need ...so they can give *the gift of themselves*, at their best, to their dear loved ones.

At Christmastime, love and family should be paramount.

We should be gathered together in warmth and light.

For families in crisis, that’s not possible.

But it is possible with YOU.

When you donate to Catholic Charities of Idaho, you don’t help only one person at a time. Each person



Turn over, please ↗

you help is empowered to be there for their family, to help them heal too. Your kindness means children can care for their parents. Your generosity means grandparents can support their grandchildren. Your compassion means more hearts can find forgiveness, strength, and peace.

It's a beautiful mystery, what God can do through you.

And through others, like Dawn. She was so moved by the help she received that, after her mother died and left her a small inheritance, she sent us a portion of it because, she says, *"I want other families to have the lifeline I had."*

Would you do me a favor and add an Idaho family to your Christmas list this year? You can be there for them with life-changing mental health counseling, emergency assistance, and essentials such as clothes, winter coats, sweatshirts, gloves, hats, blankets, diapers, wipes, hygiene kits ...and emotional support and guidance.

This might be the most important gift you give all year long.

Thank you for believing and investing in your neighbors.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Eddie Trask

Executive Director, Catholic Charities of Idaho



P.S. **Please give by December 31st** to be there for your Idaho neighbors in crisis this Christmas. You could make all the difference for them — by providing urgently needed mental health care, emergency crisis intervention, and long-term stability for families, seniors, and individuals in need across Idaho.

These are gifts they'll never forget. These are gifts they'll be forever grateful for.

*You can rush your gift to help families right away at
ccidaho.org/donate ♥*