



Catholic Charities

Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York

www.catholiccharities.cc

The Mission

"Care With Dignity, Life With Hope"

Autumn 2004
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Welcoming the Stranger

Over the summer, we were blessed with the opportunity to work with parishes and diocesan partners in helping an extremely vulnerable population suffering horrific conditions unheard of on Long Island. Not only was it a blessing to work together, but also a joy in meeting these faith-filled people who were sustained through the arduous ordeal by their trust in God.

In late June, Federal authorities raided three sites in Amityville, Brentwood, and Coram that allegedly held 69 Peruvian immigrants captive by human traffickers. The victims were traumatized by their captivity, during which they lived in squalid conditions. More than 30 men, women, and children were living on every inch of space in one of the houses. They had come to the United States believing they had valid visas to remain here and work toward a better life for themselves and their families. They instead found filth and miserable conditions, coercion, and abuse. They were told again and again by their captors that they would be deported if they did not cooperate. Some of their documents were taken from them, leaving them powerless—without any identification or work permits. Their living conditions were abominable. They had no refrigeration for their food. Most were forced to work two full-time jobs and sometimes a third, handing over their paychecks to their captors to pay off their debt of thousands of dollars. They were lucky to have \$20 to \$30 left over to meet basic needs, much less sending money home to their impoverished families.

Within hours of the raids, government officials contacted Catholic Charities in an effort to meet the basic needs of the victims. The Church on Long Island responded to their plight with a tremendous outpouring of caring and help. It was an honor for us to be chosen to assist the Peruvians. The response to this crisis was both immediate and profes-

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: the recruitment, transporting or harboring of persons by means of force or the threat of force or coercion. Having control over another person for exploitation by means of abduction, abuse of power, deception or fraud, or by giving or receiving payment or benefits. Exploitation may take the form of the prostitution of others or sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery.

sional. The well-coordinated effort brought about a smooth integration of ministries among Catholic Charities services and parish ministries. Catholic Charities provided the immigrants with psychological counseling for trauma, medical attention, job placement, housing, and immigration assistance. The day following the raids, the Peruvians were interviewed by Catholic Charities Immigrant Services staff to assess their needs. Families and institutions responded generously with clothing and food. The Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Huntington housed 23 adults for three weeks. They had their own rooms, took their meals with the seminary staff and students, and shared a common lounge where they could watch TV and talk together. St. Frances de Chantal parish in Wantagh and St. Anthony of Padua in East Northport were instrumental in finding temporary homes and necessary items for the immigrants. Many parishes, other agencies, and families temporarily hosted smaller numbers in their homes and many made monetary donations. Others, like the young mothers of our Regina Residence, donated personal items like clothing and toiletries.

During captivity, the immigrants were not allowed to attend Mass or any religious service. One of the first things they requested after the raids were bibles in Spanish. While they were in protective custody at a hotel in Suffolk, Msgr. Thomas Molloy, pastor of St. Luke's Parish in Brentwood chair of our Board of Trustees, visited them and celebrated Mass in their native Spanish. Many of the immigrants and the federal agents who were present were overcome with emotion—tears streaming down their faces.

Some victims surprised their host families with dinner, which they bought with their own money. Others brought toys home from the parish thrift shops for the host family's children. This generosity amidst very trying and uncertain conditions was very moving for the host families.



The staff and students of the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Huntington welcomed the Peruvian immigrants with warm hospitality.

Affordable Housing for Mom and Dad

A Tale of Two Prospects, and a Hundred Homes and Hopes

Here is a tale of two proposals to build beautiful apartments in the Town of Brookhaven for senior citizens on limited incomes. It is a story of two concrete efforts to respond to aging parents and grandparents who only hope to be able to finish their years on Long Island where they have lived all their lives. It is a report of positive partnership with two parishes on Long Island, one Catholic and one Lutheran, and collaboration with the federal government, with Suffolk County, and in at least one case with the Town of Brookhaven on everything from funding to resolving zoning, amenities, and community building issues.

The first is a tale of amazing grace—and prayers answered. A few years ago, Fr. Nicholas Figliola and the parish of St. Frances Cabrini approached Catholic Charities with an offer to sell a six-acre plot of land to build affordable housing. Familiar with George Link, the 75 beautiful apartments that Charities built and operates just around the corner, and knowing that most of the residents in Charities' other 13 housing complexes came either from the very village where the residence was located or from villages immediately adjoining, the parish hoped to build apartments for residents of the parish and broader Coram region. With a design team of architects and engineers and the expertise of the Housing Department at Charities, nearly \$10 million dollars was secured from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Federal Home Loan Bank, and Suffolk County. With active and steady support from Brookhaven Town Council members Gene Gerard and Edward J. Hennessey, an exceptional zoning approval was unanimously passed by the entire town board, even as a building moratorium was suddenly imposed town-wide. Construction on Cabrini Gardens has already begun and is expected to be completed by the end of 2005—which is none too soon, because just on word of mouth (that is, without any marketing at all) there are already more than 250 seniors on the waiting list for Cabrini Gardens!

- **66 Affordable Rental Apartments for Seniors: "OK to GO" at St. Frances Cabrini, Coram**
- **33 More in Ridge: *Need a Community "PUSH" for Approval By the Town of Brookhaven***

"One of the most serious economic and social problems facing Long Island is affordable housing," noted Laura A. Cassell, CEO of Catholic Charities, "and we commend the Town of Brookhaven for approving this plan. Housing is especially a worry for our aging parents and grandparents who pray that they'll be able to stay in the area where they've spent their entire lives," she adds. "We are delighted to be able to say to at least 66 more, 'We are building your new home, right here at this wonderful parish!'"

The second tale is not certain of so happy an ending—unless seniors and others in the community prevail on the Town to approve this plan also. More convincing seems to be needed to un-block the construction of this site, though it is nearly identical in nature and opportunity to the Cabrini proposal.



Seniors from the community came together for a rally at Brookhaven Town Hall to urge the town board to approve the new housing complex.

Like Cabrini, this is a tale of a Long Island parish approaching Catholic Charities with some land and a mission. This time however, the parish was Lutheran, the parish of St. Mark's in Ridge. Having made the decision to merge its congregation into neighboring Hope Lutheran of Selden, the Lutherans offered the St. Mark's church building and three acres to Catholic Charities so that their land would continue to serve in everlasting ministry as affordable housing for seniors. Catholic Charities developed a plan for 33 beautiful apartments that would preserve the former church as a center for the

seniors and all of Ridge. The federal government has already granted \$4 million dollars for the residence. Once again, without even a moment of marketing, there are already more than 110 people on the waiting list.

Unfortunately, a group representing a fraction of area residents raised objections to the proposal, preferring that the site remain either a church or undeveloped. For the moment at least, Town Supervisor John J. LaValle has signaled his own opposition, at various times raising concerns of isolation, lack of sidewalks, and general concerns for crime in the area. Oddly, however, he actually told one newspaper that he would not change his mind even if the Pope came to Brookhaven! Led by Bishop Murphy and joined by Lutheran Bishop Bowman and a huge interfaith effort of area parishes and community groups, seniors and others in Ridge and Brookhaven inundated Mr. LaValle and other members of the Town Board with more than 3,000 letters, phone calls and visits and even a rally at Brookhaven Town Hall on September 21st. The message is, "Please! We need this housing, for ourselves, or our Moms and Dads!"

If you are a resident of Brookhaven and would like to join the effort to do something about affordable housing, here is your chance! Join the Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian churches on Long Island and the seniors and others in Ridge, Coram, and throughout Brookhaven by writing or calling Mr. LaValle at One Independence Hill, Farmingville NY 11738, (631) 451-6640. We also urge you to write your local Town of Brookhaven council member at Town Hall, 3233 Route 112, Medford, NY 11763. Finally, you can be heard on this issue by writing to the Letters Editor at Newsday, 235 Pinelawn Road, Melville, NY 11747-4250 or, better yet, call us at 516-733-7076.

Thanks be to God—and the persistence of good people raising a calm but clear voice—our Church has been able to give many of Long Island's precious seniors the keys to their own homes. Cabrini is one example; Ridge can be another. Yes, you can build something beautiful. . . for your Mom or Dad, or someone else's.

Catholic Charities' Housing Department provides disadvantaged people with the opportunity for safe and affordable housing and access to a supportive network of services. The program currently operates 15 housing facilities in Nassau and Suffolk counties, totaling more than 1,250 units.

Catholic Charities has built and maintains fine affordable housing and residential services for seniors; young mothers; people with physical disabilities, developmentally disabilities, mental illness, and HIV/AIDS. Each has its own application and eligibility requirements, and regrettably, in many cases, a waiting list. For more information, please call 516-733-7000.

Responding...

CATHOLIC CHARITIES' 2nd ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC

Our 2nd golf classic took place September 27, 2004, at **Huntington Crescent Club**. This year's honoree was **Mr. Joseph R. Ficalora**, President & CEO of **New York Community Bank**. The event raised approximately \$200,000, significantly more than in 2003.



*Mr. Joseph R. Ficalora,
President & CEO of
New York Community
Bank, Catholic Charities'
2004 Golf Classic
Honoree.*

We thank our major sponsors for making the event such a memorable success. These sponsors include **Roslyn Savings Foundation, GE Asset Management, Petro Heat & Power, Cullen Dykman Bleakley Platt LLP, KPMG Peat Marwick, JPMorgan Chase, Wheeler Trigg & Kennedy, and Mutual of America**. We owe a special debt of gratitude to our committee for their tireless efforts, especially **Lou Cassara and Joan Heller**. Thank you!

REGINA CELEBRATE LIFE DINNER



To advance the life mission of the Diocese, our fundraising efforts continue with the **Celebrate Life Dinner**, scheduled for November 9, 2004 at the **Woodbury Country Club**, honoring **Pat and Des McCarthy**. All funds raised at this event will go to support Regina Residence in Merrick, which provides housing and specialized care for young single mothers and their babies. We are very pleased to honor **Pat and Des McCarthy** for their lifelong devotion to the Church on Long Island and its many ministries, including the original Regina Assemblies. For dinner sponsorship details call 516-733-7082.

GRANTS

This year Catholic Charities Visually Impaired Persons (VIP) Center benefits from a \$20,000 grant from the **Allene Reuss Memorial Trust**. The Lynbrook program has long been a place where blind and visually impaired people can engage in recreational, educational, and interfaith spiritual activities, all of which alleviate the isolation that they might otherwise face.

In addition to outstanding event sponsorship of our golf classic, the **Roslyn Savings Foundation** provided a \$15,000 grant to create affordable housing opportunities for seniors. The grant supports our energetic, capable housing team in developing housing initiatives like those featured in this issue, working with community groups and private partners, securing funding, coordinating planning and construction, operating existing sites, and providing residents with social services and pastoral support.

Around and About Catholic Charities

- The caring and compassionate **Catholic Charities Link-Age Case Management** team extends beyond the bounds of our own staff. One example is that of **Adrian Hersey**, spouse of our case manager **Pandora Hersey**. He worked on his own to help one of the clients who was about to become homeless within a short period of time. Pandora worked with much love, compassion, and understanding for months to secure as many services as possible for the client. As a volunteer, Adrian assists his wife with her clients in any way he can. In this particular instance, he helped with the moving, getting the new apartment set up, putting up shelves, hooking up the TV, and shopping for whatever the client needed. Catholic Charities is very grateful to **Adrian** who does so much and gives of himself from his heart in so many unselfish ways, as do all our case managers.
- Selected from more than 75 nominations, **Catholic Charities Housing Department** received a **2004 Smart Growth Award** from **Vision Long Island** in June. Vision Long Island works to promote responsible development and livability in our communities. More than 300 people attended the awards ceremony, representing a broad range of Long Island leaders, advocates, and professionals. Catholic Charities was chosen for its leadership and vision in providing housing opportunities and choices for a range of household types, including housing for seniors and people with disabilities.
- **KUDOS!** In March, Catholic Charities Health Systems, Inc. **Adult Day Health Care Program for People With HIV/AIDS (ADHC)** was awarded "Social Program of the Year" by **Suffolk County Department of Health's Medical Social Workers** at their annual National Social Month ceremony. In addition, **Barbara Shea**, Intake Coordinator of ADHC, received an award for her outstanding work and for going "above and beyond the call of duty" in assisting this population. The program and Barbara both received proclamations from Suffolk County Executive, **Steve Levy**, in recognition of their achievements.
- Catholic Charities recently celebrated a number of milestone anniversaries. **Christopher Residence** in Valley Stream celebrated its 30th anniversary. **Msgr. Emmet Fagan Residence** in Elmont celebrated its 15th anniversary. **Ted Hansler Residence** in Hampton Bays celebrated their 10th Anniversary. Catholic Charities **Franklin Square** and **Massapequa Park Senior Community Service Centers (SCSC)** celebrated their 27th anniversaries. The **Oceanside SCSC** commemorated their 30th anniversary with a party at the Coral House in Baldwin. Honored guests were **Sharon Mullon**, Commissioner of the Nassau County Department of Senior Citizen Affairs, **Linda Ilan**, field representative from the same department, and Nassau County Legislator, **Denise Ford**, from District 4.



Photo ID:TOP:

Left: Marietta Capizzi, oldest member of the Oceanside Senior Community Service Center at the venerable age of 103, Barbara Klich, Program Manager and Bessie Horton, Kitchen Supervisor, who celebrated her 30th year of service with Catholic Charities.



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