



The Mission

Care With Dignity ... Life With Hope

September 2008

Volume 12 No. 2

www.catholiccharities.cc

"The Practice of Love"

Pope Benedict inspires a nation

Catholic Charities was awash in excitement in the days and weeks leading up to April 16th. That's when hundreds of people gathered on the White House lawn to officially welcome Pope Benedict XVI on his long-awaited first papal visit to the United States. The six-day trip was marked by jubilant celebrations but his presence simultaneously offered many Americans a dose of peace and fortitude in the face of a turbulent social and economic climate. His visit was particularly meaningful for employees and supporters of Catholic Charities throughout the United States as he has clearly called attention to the role of charity in the life of faith.

Laura Cassell, CEO of Catholic Charities of Rockville Centre, a guest at the White House ceremony presided over by President Bush explains, "Pope Benedict's first encyclical letter, 'God Is Love' is all about charity being a cornerstone of our faith. He writes that the 'Practice of Love' is as important as proclaiming the Gospel and celebrating the sacraments. He describes them as 'inseparable.'"

"Only if I serve my neighbor can my eyes be opened to what God does for me and how much he loves me."

Pope Benedict XVI



Msgr. Robert Emmet Fagan, former Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities, greets Pope Benedict XVI at Ground Zero.

Pope Benedict's six-day itinerary in Washington D.C. and New York City included addressing the United Nations, celebrating Masses at baseball stadiums in both cities, and visiting the Ground Zero site. Among the guests who walked down the ramp with His Holiness into Ground Zero was Msgr. Robert Emmet Fagan, a former director of Catholic Charities of Rockville Centre (1968-1974), who lost his nephew, James Murphy IV, to that day's tragic events. Msgr. Fagan noted that the Holy Father's presence was truly healing for the families. "I can't exaggerate the sensitivity of this man's face or eyes. He was so connected with you."

Barbara Brady, a Catholic Charities staffer, added, "The sense that he has a real love for those who suffer is what motivates you. His outlook embodies what we stand for here at Catholic Charities."



Saving Energy While Serving People

One need only pick up a paper or turn on a television to be inundated with the “go-green” message. Whether it be global-warming, wind turbines, or the price of oil, one thing is clear: everyone must play a part in reducing our dependency on fossil fuels.

Recently, Catholic Charities of Rockville Centre did just that as we officially opened our first “Energy Star Labeled” home. The house was constructed for families living with HIV/AIDS and uses innovative designs and materials to cut energy costs. Funding for the home was provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and was administered by the United Way of Long Island.

The program itself isn’t new. For more than 11 years, Catholic Charities has provided housing for people living with the disease who are at risk for homelessness. But only a handful of nonprofit organizations on Long Island have special-needs housing that is eligible for New York State’s Energy Star label. The homes have to meet stringent standards, including extra insulation and air sealing, high-performance windows and doors, and high-efficiency heating, cooling, lighting, and appliance systems. The results are worth the effort as these homes use an estimated 30% less energy than conventional homes.

According to Program Coordinator, Don Pratt, the technology also offers a safer, healthier home for people with compromised immune systems. “Along with increased air sealing and insulation, the ventilation system helps ensure healthy air quality and prevents mold growth, which is dangerous for people living with AIDS.”

Saving energy makes sense. Work is already underway on a new special-needs housing project that will be energy efficient and the agency has replaced its worst gas-guzzlers with fuel-sipping Ford Focus sedans. Howard Duff, an administrator of residential services for Catholic Charities, sees an even bigger picture. “Our hope is to encourage other nonprofits to look for greener alternatives. It’s good stewardship of both natural and financial resources because the money saved goes right back to serving those in need.”



**Senior
Apartments
Now
Available!**

The Catholic Charities housing department

is now accepting new applications for the latest openings at St. Anne’s Gardens in Brentwood, Suffolk County. The lovely 100-unit facility built in 2000 offers senior citizens safe and affordable housing with on-site laundry, picturesque gardens and picnic area, and easy access to local merchants. But what makes St. Anne’s special is a staff dedicated to the physical, social, and spiritual well-being of its residents. This includes a full-time social service coordinator who arranges events and helps residents access local services. A pastoral care coordinator also keeps in touch with residents, identifies their needs, and connects them with those who can help. Weekly on-site medical services are available to the income-qualified as are monthly food packages through Catholic Charities’ commodity supplemental food program (CSFP). Space is limited so don’t wait. To apply for yourself or someone you love, please call Barbara McCaffrey at (516) 733-7076.

From Our Mailbag

From our office for persons with disabilities



Four years ago our daughter lost her sight completely. Without your help it would not have been possible to go through the hard times. We owe her success to your help and support. C.

From Talbot House, our chemical dependence crisis and withdrawal center

Before I walked into Talbot House I asked myself, “Where is God in all of this?” After I met all of you I realized God was right in front of me... H.

From our senior services program

I am writing this letter to let you know how grateful I am that you made my mother’s life a little better. If happiness makes a person live longer it was proven by my mother. L.

Your Heart, Our Hands

Have you read the wonderful stories in this newsletter? If so, you probably see why I find myself both inspired and gratified by the good work in which we have a hand. But I want you to feel that as well. You see, this good news was made possible by you. None of it happens without your support. It was you who reached out to 53,000 people last year, it was you who helped Michael find a home, and it was you who helped build a house for those suffering from AIDS. We at Catholic Charities are simply the hands that do the work of your heart.

As this newsletter is mailed only a few times a year, it is with great care that we ask for your support. **But we do ask. Please make your tax-deductible gift in the enclosed envelope or call (516) 733-7028 to make a secure credit card donation.** Your gift today is as important as it’s ever been in bringing Christ’s love to Long Island. I will keep you in my prayers and I ask that you keep Catholic Charities in yours as well.

On behalf of the thousands of lives you’ve already changed, I thank you.

Laura A. Cassell
CEO, Catholic Charities
Diocese of Rockville Centre

Laura Cassell celebrates the 100th birthday of Mary Sesso, who attends our Franklin Square Senior Center.



Responding...

Our special thanks to these friends for helping us provide
Care With Dignity...Life With Hope.

The **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)** awarded \$668,000 to our Project Independence in Suffolk County. It assists homeless individuals and families in acquiring safe housing while moving them toward financial independence through educational and employment programs.

The **United Way of Long Island** and the **Islip Community Development Association** presented \$900,000 in HUD funds to our Special Needs Housing program to develop and maintain new housing and to offer support services.

Anonymous friends provided a \$100,000 gift toward the purchase of a transitional residence for young mothers leaving Regina Residence to live independently with their children.

Our Housing Department received \$68,000 from **Fidelis Care NY** to help ensure consistent, quality care for our senior housing residents.

Cablevision of Long Island generously donated air time on a variety of networks to our public service announcement (PSA) campaign, broadcasting our message of hope more than 300 times in May and June. Log on to www.catholiccharities.cc/difference if you missed them.

Newsday Charities, a fund of the McCormick Tribune Foundation, donated \$60,000 to Catholic Charities' Christmas-Help-A-Family Fund. This was added to the \$54,564 donated by our supporters. The entire amount of \$114,564 was dedicated to making the holidays brighter for 444 families.

Henry Schein Cares, Inc. Global Donations Program will contribute dental products worth up to \$25,000 to our dental clinic over the next two years.

The Roslyn Savings Foundation provided a \$5,000 grant to our Thea Bowman Residence, an affordable housing facility on Long Island specifically for those with physical disabilities.

AROUND and ABOUT

Dr. Fabiola Milord, administrator of Catholic Charities Dental Services, was recently appointed to the **New York State Task Force on Public Health Dentistry and Access**, offering policy recommendations to the Governor's office on how to increase access to dental care for the state's rural and urban poor. Upon her return from medical missions to Ghana, Haiti, and New Orleans this year, she was also featured in the *Long Island Business News's* "Ones to Watch" section. Kudos, Dr. Milord!



Congratulations to our **Massapequa Park and Franklin Square senior centers** on their notable anniversaries. Both have offered transportation, hot meals, recreation, health services, and socialization to senior citizens for 30 years!

The Catholic Charities family bid farewell to **Dr. Paul Kirdahy**, former Executive Director of Catholic Charities, who passed away in April of this year. His gentle manner and passionate dedication were instrumental in his leadership of our agency. While at Charities Dr. Kirdahy established the Food and Nutrition (FAN) program on Long Island as well as Talbot House, our chemical dependence crisis and withdrawal center in Bohemia.



90 Cherry Lane
Hicksville, NY 11801-6299
Return Service Requested

visit us at www.catholiccharities.cc

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Hicksville, NY
11801
Permit No. 796

The Mission
Office of Public Affairs
and Development,
Catholic Charities,
Diocese of
Rockville Centre
(516) 733-7028

Laura A. Cassell
Chief Executive Officer

Editor:
Scott Stepp

Writers This Issue:
Umberto Mignardi

Photos by:
Greg Shemitz

Design & Layout:
Jeff Thureau

Circulation Manager:
Jodi Taggart