



Catholic Charities

Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York

[www.catholiccharities.cc](http://www.catholiccharities.cc)

# The Mission

*"Care With Dignity, Life With Hope"*

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## An Expression of Mercy: *Caring for those in need*

Almost 50 years ago, Catholic Charities was created as the expression of a new diocese's will to care for all who live on Long Island, not only those who are members of our faith. Very early, Bishop Kellenberg clearly showed the region what kind of church the Catholic Church on Long Island would be: a caring church, that seeks out the isolated and discarded and calls them its very own.

Long Island's population was much, much smaller then, as was Catholic Charities. The agency operated from a central office in Mineola and a branch in Bay Shore, providing mental health and other services. Since then, this expression of the Church's mercy has grown to serve 80,000 people in need annually, with 600 people working in its range of ministries. All of this development has been the result of a growing partnership with parishes. As more parishes opened on Long Island and began to meet needs in their communities, pastors and lay ministers made us aware of those needs. Working together, parishes and Catholic Charities developed ways of serving people in need locally, with the resources and volunteers available within the community. Almost 30 years ago, this parish connection was felt to be so important that the agency underwent a thorough reorganization that would both strengthen core ministries and bring them into closer, more collaborative relationships with the parishes of Long Island. Parish social ministry would bring the church's mercy and justice efforts to the community level, allowing the organization to reach many more people in need.

While we were developing partnerships and collaborative efforts with ministries, parishioners began to build the diocese's ministries in another way, by contributing to annual diocesan appeals. Since our diocese was founded, such appeals have provided more than \$60 million for critical Catholic Charities programs.

Catholic Charities' story has been intertwined with those of local parishes developing their own congregations, leaders, and ministries, all of this fueled by the generosity of donors in the pews. The story of this growing

relationship is also inseparable from the narratives of thousands of people who came to the Church with despair and were given hope, who came hungry and were given food, who came with chemical dependence and were shown the way to freedom-even those who didn't come at all, but were sought out and given food, counseling, and comfort wherever they were in the community .

We have printed a few of those people's stories here. Please take a moment to read them, knowing that your support of Catholic Charities and the Catholic Ministries Appeal helps these neighbors and thousands others like them.

Without ministries like those of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, people with needs might live their whole lives in isolation, poverty, and despair. But with your support, the ministries of the Church reach them, meet their basic needs, and affirm their dignity.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

**Marylou**, in her 70s, first came to one of our senior community service centers after her concerned daughter referred her. She was isolated at home after the death of her husband two years before. At first, quiet and reserved, she attended the center once or twice a week. She avoided parties at the center. She gradually opened up and now comes to the center four or five times a week, never missing a party. She has become one of our most visible volunteers. She recently surprised the staff by saying that she looks forward to coming and doesn't know where she would be without it.



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*Photo Courtesy Catholic Charities USA, Alexandria, VA*

# Learning from Experience

Our culture values youth. Our television shows, magazines, and pervasive advertisements pay a lot of attention to those who are young, attractive, and making a lot of money. Too often, the wisdom and peace that age can bring are undervalued. Too often, the breathless pace and endless demands of our lives as students and workers lead many of us to forget that seniors are deserving of our respect, attention, and compassion.

Ten students from **Holy Trinity** and **Bishop Kellenberg** high schools are participating in a Catholic Charities pilot project that will bring them to a greater appreciation of the wealth of wisdom, experience, and humor that our seniors possess. This project matches the students, singly or in pairs, with seniors at Catholic Charities senior community service centers or affordable housing complexes. The seniors, especially those who have lost loved ones and live alone, will also have a bit of relief from the isolation that can come from aging.

Catholic Charities Volunteer Services Coordinator **Donna Reed** and Trustee **Ed Sullivan** approached both high schools with the idea of the oral history project and found both immediately receptive. Seventeen students volunteered to participate, either through Campus Ministry or their senior year Christian Service course. After an orientation, during which Donna and Ed explained the project to the students and shared some interviewing techniques, the project began. In late January cassette recorders in hand, some Holy Trinity students visited residents at Bishop Daly Gardens, an affordable apartment complex in Uniondale, home to approximately 45 seniors. Another Holy Trinity group visited the Seaford Senior Community Service Center, a nutrition and socialization program that draws approximately 60 participants each weekday. A few weeks later, a group from Bishop Kellenberg High School began visiting seniors at the 57-unit Bishop Kellenberg Gardens apartment complex in Oceanside.

"We wanted the kids to develop a sense of the value of these older people," said Donna Reed. "We felt they would be interested in all of the experiences they've been through, such as the Great Depression, World War II, and the tremendous change here on Long Island since then."

In some cases, the going has been slow. Some students found their senior subjects quiet and reserved. Other students and their seniors connected instantly, talking until they ran out of tape, and eager to schedule another meeting. Donna and Ed meet with the students periodically to assess progress and make suggestions for more effective interviews.

The seniors' narratives show lives that have been shaped in some cases by personal tragedies such as illness or

disability, as well as blessings of family. (One woman surprised her interviewers with stories of her 17 children.)

Some of them were swept along by larger forces like emigration or war. Some shared the faith that has sustained them through adversity.

"We knew each student could benefit from talking with someone who'd been through all these experiences, and come through them with strong character and a sense of humor," said Ed Sullivan. "There's a lot to appreciate in the stories they heard, and the students have certainly picked up on that. They're even scheduling visits on their vacation days!"



*Catholic Charities serves senior citizens on Long Island through meals-on-wheels, Commodity Supplemental Food Program, case management, and senior nutrition sites such as the one attended by this couple in Seaford.*

*"While speaking of older people, I would also say a word to the young, to invite them to remain close to the elderly. Dear young people, I urge you to do this with great love and generosity. Older people can give you much more than you can imagine." --John Paul II*

## Responding . . .

Just as a star led the wise men to Jesus, the Church is a beacon to those who wander in life's wildernesses of poverty, illness, loneliness, and despair. The needs always seem to mount during the holidays. For people who are homebound or have lost loved ones, the holidays can heighten a sense of isolation and loss. The stress of the fast-paced holiday season can take its toll on others. The lavishness of holiday celebrations, overflowing with food and gifts, can sharpen the ache of poverty for those who have no season of joy, only a few more weeks of need. And yet, year after year, readers of *The Mission* and *Newsday* reach out to people in need

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through the **Christmas Help-A-Family Fund**. This year, more than 500 individuals and families donated more than \$54,000 directly to Catholic Charities to be distributed to those in need during the holidays. **Newsday Charities**, a fund of the **McCormick Tribune Foundation**, our perennial partner in meeting holiday needs, committed to an additional grant of \$55,000, approximately a 15 per cent increase over their previous support. (See photo on back.)

The students and faculty of **Holy Trinity High School**, our next-door neighbors, raised \$1,607 for the Christmas Help-A-Family Fund. This was a 10 per cent increase over their generous support last year, and the second-highest gift the Holy Trinity community has made to CHAF in 10 years of consistent support. Thank you, Holy Trinity!

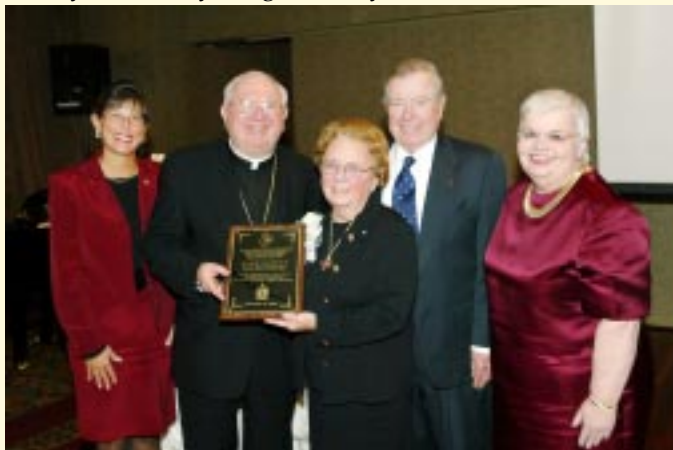
All told, support for 2004 CHAF totaled \$109,639. The funds provided support for 406 adults and 88 children during the holidays. The generosity of donors like you provided warm clothing, bounteous meals, urgently needed auto repairs, and other blessings to relieve the burdens of Long Islanders during this season of joy.

## Celebrate Life!

Catholic Charities' 1st Annual Celebrate Life Dinner, benefiting **Regina Residence** in Merrick, took place November 9, 2004, at the Woodbury Country Club. This year's honorees were **Pat and Des McCarthy**, whose devotion to the Church on Long Island and its many ministries is truly inspiring.

The event raised more than \$150,000 to support the Regina Residence in Merrick, which provides housing and support for young single mothers and their babies.

We would like to give a special thanks to our major sponsors for making this inaugural dinner such a memorable success. These sponsors include our honorees **Pat & Des McCarthy, Ms. Barbara Gannon, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Entenmann, Melkonian Capital Management, Liberty Title Agency, and Glenwood Securities, Inc.** On behalf of the mothers and babies we serve at Regina Residence, thank you all for your generosity.



Honorees Pat McCarthy and Des McCarthy accept award from Bishop Murphy. With them is Laura Cassell, CEO of Catholic Charities, left, and Trustee Barbara Gannon.

### *Continued from cover page:*

Before her death from AIDS, one woman wrote, "In 1997 I had no direction in my life. I was drinking and occasionally doing drugs. I knew I had to make a change in my life if I wanted to live. I became client at Catholic Charities where I found support from a caring, dedicated staff plus loving friendships from others who were living with HIV/AIDS. I am now part of a family. In addition, I'm finding my way spiritually; something I've struggled with in the past. I thank God for the spiritual guidance which brings me peace within. I feel loved, accepted, and safe."

**Jean** is a 56-year-old woman with a mild developmental disability who lives productively, happily, and relatively independently in a Catholic Charities residence. When Jean was young, she lived in New York City with both parents and her brother. Before she passed adolescence, both of her parents had died, and she went to live with her grandmother. When her grandmother passed a few years later, Jean entered a Suffolk facility



*Working at a retail shop helps Jean maintain her independence.*

for people with disabilities. While at the center, Jean demonstrated competency in a number of different jobs, and it was clear that she had potential to live more independently. She moved to

Catholic Charities Christopher Residence in Valley Stream, to an environment that is less like an institution and more like a home. She continued to work during the day, distinguishing herself as exacting, diligent, and well adjusted, despite her shyness. Some years later, Jean chose to move to another Catholic Charities site, Mako Residence in Southold, designed for living that is even more independent. A few years later, she made yet another move, to Catholic Charities Helfrick Residence in East Moriches, where she shared the house with two other women, with minimal supervision. Although she enjoyed this independence, Jean eventually chose to return to Mako Residence, which she felt was better for her. Jean now holds down competitive employment at a retail outlet in Suffolk County. She enjoys a very high quality of life, and exercises a great deal of freedom of choice. Jean accompanies staff to food shop, prepares meals in the microwave, and makes her own lunch each day. Jean has many opportunities to choose her recreational activities as well as vacation plans. In recent years, her outings included Cape Cod, Colonial Williamsburg, Hawaii, Montauk, Pennsylvania Dutch Country, Philadelphia, and Radio City Music Hall.

## Around and About Catholic Charities

- **Peter Nichol**, Ph.D., Special Projects Coordinator for Mental Health Outpatient Services, successfully defended his dissertation at the **Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare**. Dr. Nichol's dissertation was on the topic of caregiving to the elderly. The key recommendation to his study is that caregiving to elders must become a shared community responsibility and not left solely to family members. With fewer family caregivers and a rapidly growing population of seniors, this is becoming a critical issue in our society.
- **The Parish Social Ministry Department (PSM)** hosted a three-session seminar last November for people interested in exploring employment in PSM in our diocese. The sessions presented the vision of PSM, a model of PSM, and components of direct service, advocacy, and community organizing. Following the seminar, the PSM Department was able to make several referrals to parishes interviewing candidates for PSM coordinators. Five seminar participants out of 35 have been hired in those positions. Another PSM effort, the **Public Policy Education Network** began a new series of training for PSM coordinators and volunteers. Volunteer Skill Development Level 2: The Politics of Justice is a three-week program for all who work in either direct service or advocacy. The series looks at Catholic Social Teaching, case-to-cause advocacy, and the political process of challenging injustice.
- We welcome **Jennifer Monahan** to the position of Director of the Diocesan Office of Housing. A registered architect, Ms. Monahan holds an MBA in Real Estate from **Columbia University** and a B.S. in Architecture from **Catholic University**. She brings a broad background in architecture and construction as assistant commissioner of operations and chief construction supervisor in numerous construction projects with **New York City** these past 14 years. Ms. Monahan assumes responsibility for the largest single collection of affordable rental units on Long Island outside of the government.
- **JP Morgan Chase's Global Day of Service** provided funds to spruce up two homes in our Teaching Family Home Program. In September, \$1,000 of painting supplies and a painting team led by **Daniel P. Buonincontri** went to our Bethpage home, and \$1,000 of paint and supplies and a team led by **Howard B. Shaw** helped spruce up our Islip location.
- **Kathy Ayers-Lanzillotta**, Administrator of Chemical Dependence Services, was recognized with an award from her colleagues in the **Suffolk County Quality Consortium** for the four-year term she recently completed as president of that group. The Quality Consortium of Suffolk County is a partnership of 24 non-profit organizations that are dedicated to the delivery of comprehensive, affordable and accessible chemical dependency treatment and prevention services and advocates for the strengthening and expansion of these services. "These four years have only heightened the respect I have for my colleagues in the field," Ms. Ayers-Lanzillotta said. "I feel very good about the things we've accomplished in the Consortium, and I'm hopeful for even greater successes in the future."



### Photo ID:

Laura A. Cassell, CEO of Catholic Charities and Jodi Taggart, Catholic Charities, receive a grant from Newsday Executive VP and General Manager, John McKeon, left, and Newsday Publisher, President, and CEO, Timothy P. Knight



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