



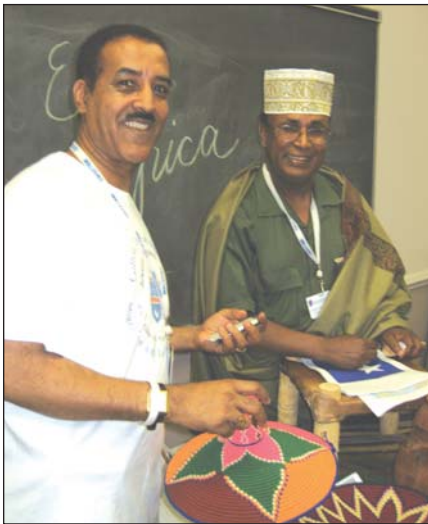
The Mission

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington

Fall 2009

Catholic Charities Welcomes Back Refugee Services

Photo by Jeanne Spaeth



Seyoum Berhe (left), director of Migration and Refugee Services (MRS), visits a table at a World Refugee Day event held by MRS.

On October 1, the diocesan Office of Migration and Refugee Services (MRS) became part of Catholic Charities, a rela-

tionship it had held earlier in its 34-year history. MRS was founded by Bishop Thomas Welsh in 1975, and its mission has been to help refugees fleeing war and persecution to build new lives in northern Virginia.

From 1980 to 1993, MRS functioned as one of the major programs of Catholic Charities. In 1994, Bishop John Keating re-established MRS as a stand-alone office within the diocese with the continuing mission of providing resettlement services.

Catholic Charities' Executive Director Stephen Luteran says, "We welcome the dedicated MRS staff and look forward to finding ways our Hogar Immigrant Services and Emergency Assistance staff can collaborate with them in meeting the needs

of refugee families."

Since its inception in 1975, MRS has helped more than 20,000 refugees, who are defined by the United Nations as individuals fleeing their country of origin because of a "well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion."

MRS's major source of funding is expected to remain grants received from the Commonwealth of Virginia and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The Commonwealth and USCCB both receive funds from the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for the care and resettlement of refugees. The USCCB distributes these federal funds to dioceses throughout the country.

The Refugee's Difficult Path

Here is the path a refugee follows, based on a summary from MRS Director Seyoum Berhe:

- Refugee flees homeland.
- U.N. High Commissioner of Refugees considers repatriation (send refugee back to mother country), nationalization (have refugee stay in country to which he or she fled), or third-country asylum/resettlement.
- For those referred to America, the U.S. Department of State conducts an interview at a Migration

Processing Center.

- If eligible, the refugee is included in an allocation to the U.S. Domestic Resettlement Agency.
- This agency may assign the refugee to the MRS of the USCCB, which may refer the refugee to the MRS office in the Diocese of Arlington.
- If the refugee successfully passes the medical exam and completes final paperwork, he is issued an airline ticket, and the MRS office in Arlington is notified of his arrival date.
- MRS assigns a caseworker and

This refugee arrives from war-torn Afghanistan.

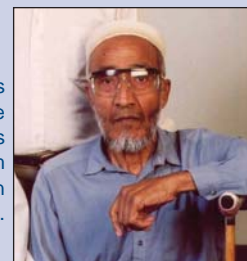


Photo by Laura Sikes, CCUSA

a volunteer sponsor and arranges for housing, furniture, and food for the refugee.

- Refugee arrives at the airport and is greeted by the MRS caseworker and sponsor. The orientation process then begins.



Stephen Luteran

FROM THE DESK OF Stephen Luteran

There are lots of things happening at Catholic Charities.

We are excited to welcome back Migration and Refugee Services to our agency.

We are also thrilled that our newest program, St. Margaret of Cortona Transitional Residences, which opened in March, is already filled with homeless families and that our newest office location in

Leesburg is having a record number of people coming for help.

The saying “if you build it, they will come” is certainly true for Catholic Charities.

Though I am happy that we are able to reach out to more people in need, I am somewhat burdened by uncertainty about whether we will have the resources to keep up with the demands.

I remain hopeful, however, because I realize that the weight of this ministry is carried by all of us. Everyone is

important in the work of Catholic Charities because each one of us has something to offer. It doesn't work unless we work together.

Please keep us in your prayers. We are thankful for your continued support.

Stephen Luteran, M.S.W., L.C.S.W.
Executive Director
Catholic Charities
of the Diocese of Arlington

As Winter Approaches, Need for Services Increases

Catholic Charities is busy all year-round, but during the winter months many of its programs face increased demands.

Food pantry and Christ House on Wheels:

The food pantry at Christ House in Alexandria is being emptied as quickly as new donations arrive. Requests for food have been increasing all year. Among the individuals and families coming for food staples are the newly unemployed. Some of these people say it is the first time they have had to ask for help.

The food pantry is also the supply source for the Christ House on Wheels food delivery program, which takes food to needy individuals in outlying areas of the diocese. In the past year, the Christ House on Wheels van delivered \$49,000 worth of food to 1,400 families in 12 counties, including Orange, Culpeper, and

Maria and her little brother eat hot meals at home, thanks to food staples their mother gets at the Christ House food pantry.



Photo by Laura Sikes, CCUSA

Madison. Call 703-549-8644.

Western Regional Office: The Western Regional Office in Leesburg is already beginning its call for children's winter coats (clean, gently used items) so that families coming by for food can also pick up coats, if needed. The office's food pantry needs donations of nonperishable food staples. In the past year, the office assisted 3,578 families and gave out 1,440 brown-bag lunches. Call 703-443-2481.

Fredericksburg District Office: In the past year, the Baby Needs Closet in the Fredericksburg office gave out baby clothes, formula, diapers, and other items to 401 low-income families. Donations to the closet are always needed. Call 540-371-1124.

Urgent call
for donations to the food pantry.
Get a food drive “starter kit” at
www.cdda.net or call
703-841-3838.

Around the Diocese

- At St. Margaret's, the staff has been working with businesses to help residents improve their job status and financial situation. Sheehy Automotives is offering an employment internship position, and Virginia Commerce Bank is training residents in money and credit management.

- Children's Services has announced its new name: Center for Adoption Services. The new name is meant to represent more clearly the staff's mission of providing pregnancy counseling, temporary foster care, and adoption services.

- Family Services has unveiled its new Web page, which explains in nontechnical language what the counseling process involves and what some of the common areas of concern are (anxiety, depression, grief and loss). Go to ccda.net/programs_family.php.

- BB&T kindly donated \$3,500 worth of computer equipment, food pantry shelving, classroom materials, and other items to Catholic Charities in September.

- Catholic Charities thanks the 1,200-plus volunteers who gave of their time and talent in the past year. To view a list of volunteer opportunities, go to ccda.net/volunteer.php. For information about the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), call 703-841-3834.

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Bishop Speaks at Jobs Ministry Session

“My motivation is to engender hope, but hope that is realistic,” said Bishop Paul Loverde to unemployed individuals at the September 17 session of Catholic Charities’ jobs ministry, popularly known as CAN (Christians Are Networking).

After thanking CAN coordinators Bill Hummel and Elizabeth Lucas for inviting him to one of the weekly evening sessions, the bishop expanded on his theme of hope.

“When we are down, we all run the risk of becoming cynical,” he said. “My conviction is that hope is realistic for each of us if it is rooted in Jesus Christ.”

Calling prayer “essential,” the bishop said, “Prayer can take the form of words and even song but the heart of prayer is beyond words and song. It is an openness from within to God’s transforming grace. Through prayer, slowly we begin to see what we did not see before, and we begin to cope with what we could not previously cope with.

“Then we have to try to understand and do what is possible for us, as you all do here at CAN with résumé writing, self-marketing, and networking, all done in a faith environment. Maybe you do something



Photo by Jeanne Spaeth

Bishop Loverde addresses attendees at one of the weekly workshops offered by Catholic Charities’ jobs ministry at St. Martin’s.

lesser now while keeping a vision of something better God wants you to do later.

“If we have one another, we will survive. We must nurture our relationships. We need our family, close friends, and supporters, like the community of believers that is here tonight.”

Throughout his presentation, the bishop quoted passages from St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans: “We know that all things work for good for those who love God. . . . If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8: 28, 31)

Since June, fifty-six job seekers have attended the weekly CAN sessions, and eleven have found jobs, reported Lucas. For more information, call 703-683-7704 or 703-830-5467.



Photos by Jeanne Spaeth



Executive Director Stephen Luteran and Elizabeth Lucas discuss preparations for the bishop’s presentation (left photo). Daniel Straub (above left) reports on his newly found job to Bill Hummel.

Fond Farewell to Carol Augustine

Photo by Beth Fitzpatrick



Carol Augustine listens to words of appreciation at her retirement luncheon.

Carol Augustine, program director of Catholic Charities' Elderly Services, retired in August after 20 years of service at the St. Martin de Porres Senior Center.

Executive Director Stephen Luteran thanked Carol for her dedicated work on behalf of the elderly and compared her work style to that of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, who would do everyday, routine things "with great love."

Carol oversaw the program that helps seniors retain social ties, health, and independence through educational activities, health screenings, access to community resources, and cultural and social events; 70% of the center participants live at or below the poverty level.

Calendar

- Nov 21 - Help the Homeless Walkathon (register at www.helpthehomelessdc.org)
- Nov 26 - Thanksgiving dinner for the hungry at Christ House
- Dec 12-13 - Christmas Collection for Catholic Charities
- Dec 25 - Christmas dinner for the hungry at Christ House
- Feb 5 - Catholic Charities Ball (ccbball2010@yahoo.com)

Hogar's Carnival Cup Celebrates Cultures

Ethnic dances, children's games, international food, and soccer matches filled the day at the second annual Carnival Cup, organized by Catholic Charities' Hogar Immigrant Services. Staff and supporters welcomed Hogar's clients—immigrants seeking English classes, citizenship application assistance, and legal advice—and their families and friends.

"This is a family day for our clients to share their many cultures and traditions, even as they forge new lives for themselves in their new country," said Hogar Program Director John Odenwelder.

Generous supporters of the August 8 celebration at Kenmore Middle School in Arlington included KIHOMAC, Amerigroup, DC United soccer team, Domino's Pizza, Chipotle, and SHOPPERS.

On-site volunteers came



Photos by John Odenwelder



Both teens (top photo) and adults join in the festivities at the second annual Carnival Cup.

from sororities and fraternities at George Mason University, and Lucila Fernandez, an ExxonMobil intern, handled the major planning for the event.

For more information about Hogar, call 703-534-9805.

Students Walk to End Homelessness



Photo by Jeanne Spaeth

St. Thomas More Cathedral School students walk for the homeless.

Diocesan schools are joining in the effort to end homelessness by holding Mini-Walks at their schools this Fall in conjunction with the annual Fannie Mae Help the Homeless program.

The students are walking for the Catholic Coalition to End Homelessness and listing the coalition as the beneficiary of the funds they raise through reg-

istration fees. Members of the coalition are Catholic Charities, Borromeo Housing, Catholics for Housing, and Good Shepherd Housing.

Students in Grades kindergarten through 12 are eligible to participate in a Mini-Walk, which a school can organize to meet its own specifications within these general guidelines: inclusion of a discussion of homelessness and a program of 30 minutes or more that includes a minimum of 15 minutes of physical activity, such as walking.

Adults can participate in the program by joining the November 21 Walkathon on the Mall in Washington, DC.

Register on line at www.helpthehomelessdc.org.