



# The Mission

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington

Summer 2008

## New Shelter Will Serve Homeless Families

Catholic Charities is pleased to announce expansion of its services for the homeless. Up to now, it has served homeless men at Christ House in Alexandria, but soon it will be able to assist homeless families at a facility in Woodbridge, Virginia.

The purchase of a 14-unit apartment building in April was made possible through the Diocesan capital campaign, *Rooted in Faith—Forward in Hope*.

“This transitional shelter in Prince William County will serve the needs of homeless families from any location within the Diocese and will provide housing for up to thirteen families, with the fourteenth unit serving as a staff office,” said Executive Director Stephen Luteran.

The facility is in a residential

setting and is near public transportation and an elementary school.

Agency staff will address the basic needs of the families and will work in collaboration with other local service providers to offer a continuum of care and appropriate social services. The developmental needs of the children will also be addressed.

With the ultimate goal being self-reliance, the families will be offered employment training, job placement services, life-skills training, and counseling. Life-skills topics will include budgeting and parenting.

Plans are underway to renovate the building in late summer and early fall. Once renovations are completed, Catholic Charities will open the family transitional emergency shelter to those in need.



Photos by Jeanne Spaeth



Catholic Charities' new family shelter is located in a residential area in Woodbridge, Virginia. Renovations of the building are scheduled for late summer and early fall. The front and back of the facility are shown above.

## Volunteers Receive Community Recognition



Aashish Bhimani (left) and Barbara Callahan (lower right) are award recipients.



Two of Catholic Charities' dedicated volunteers were recently recognized by the community for their service. Barbara Callahan received the 2008 Excellence in Aging Award from the Alexandria Commission on Aging, and Aashish Bhimani received a 2008 Volunteer Service Award from Volunteer Fairfax.

Callahan is a long-time ESL

teacher at St. Martin de Porres Senior Center, and she insists on teaching, to the joy of her students, even when recovering from recent surgery and chemotherapy.

Bhimani teaches citizenship classes at Immigrant Services (Hogar Hispano). He is an enthusiastic and skillful teacher, serving as the team leader of a group of six teachers who prepare students to take the U. S. citizenship test.

Top photo by Diana Gibson; bottom photo by Jeanne Spaeth

Photo by Jeanne Spaeth



Stephen Luteran

## FROM THE DESK OF Stephen Luteran

Let me share with you my recent experiences at a Vatican-sponsored retreat for leaders of Catholic charitable agencies held at the Catholic University in Guadalajara in June.

Our primary speaker was the inspirational Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, the Preacher of the Papal Household.

The spiritual exercises were meant to help charity workers gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between the two greatest commandments: love of God and love of neighbor. The reflections focused on sacred scripture and on Pope Benedict XVI's first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*.

One of the most important parts of this encyclical is the discussion of the Church's charitable activity conducted by professional and voluntary personnel and the need "to reaffirm the importance of prayer in the face of the activism and the growing secularism of many Christians engaged in charitable work" (*Deus Caritas Est*, No. 37).

Benedict stresses that "in addition to their necessary professional training, these charity workers need a 'formation of the heart': they need to be led to that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirits to others" (No. 31a). These workers have to avoid the approach of those Christians who sometimes reduce God to a footnote in their lives.

When we help our neighbor, we must bring hope that goes beyond the grave. This is what makes the Church's charitable organizations distinct and different from secular charitable agencies that "do good works." People whom we serve must experience the love of Christ. For most people, charity is the only way that they experience Christ's love in this world.

I pray that you and I may achieve this "formation of the heart."

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

## Interns Contribute while Gaining Useful Experience

Catholic Charities thanks its interns for their contributions, and the interns report that they value the learning experience.

Matia Johnson, an English major who graduated in May from Marymount University, served a four-month internship helping to write and design agency publications. "I learned a great deal about organization, working closely with program directors to get information, and following a product from start to finish," she says.

Executive Director Stephen Luteran says, "We thank Matia, who has done fine work preparing print materials for our communications program. We also thank Marymount students from Professor Barry Erdeljon's computer classes who last year helped redesign our Web site, a major undertaking that he oversaw and contributed to with a great deal of hands-on work."

Matia's advisor, Professor Susan Fay, explains, "All students at Marymount are

required to serve an internship. The opportunity at Catholic Charities has been a good fit for Matia."

Speaking about her experience, Matia says, "The internship here has really helped me. The work is connected to classes I have taken such as proofreading and composition and is related to what I hope to do—publications work and creative writing."

Her internship involved approximately 20 hours per week at the agency, with a schedule that worked around her class schedule at Marymount.



Photo by Jeanne Spaeth

Intern Matia Johnson finalizes agency brochures for printing.

Each semester, Catholic Charities has several unpaid internships available for students and works with students to devise a program that fits their schedule and interests. For more information, call 703-841-3838.

## News In Brief

- Catholic Charities thanks the O'Shaughnessy-Hurst Memorial Foundation for its \$5,000 donation given in May to assist the Christ House food pantry.
- For the second time this year, Catholic Charities is pleased to receive a donation from Loudoun Cares to help pay the utility bills of needy clients in Loudoun County. The April donation was for \$1,500.
- Alexandria Rotary kindly donated \$1,000 to Catholic Charities' St. Martin de Porres Senior Center in May.
- Catholic Charities' Fredericksburg District Office held a fund-raiser in June and July thanks to the patronage of UNO Chicago Grill in Fredericksburg. UNO's donated 20% of a bill to the Fredericksburg Office when the customer presented a specially issued coupon.
- Catholic Charities thanks the Inova Alexandria Hospital nurses who provided free blood-pressure checks and blood-sugar tests on June 26 at St. Martin's. The nurses also gave presentations on such health topics as heart disease, diabetes, and bone health.
- St. Martin's had a ribbon-cutting ceremony May 16 to showcase recent renovations made possible through the generosity and organizing of Rebuilding Together Alexandria, with support from Home Depot, AARP, the Residential Construction Worker's Association, and Alexandria's Office on Aging. The Center now has new carpeting, tile flooring, and kitchen service window, plus newly painted walls.

## Christ House's Outreach Continues

The Christ House on Wheels program continues to expand its service area. Since the program began in 2007, it has delivered food to 31 locations, including all 21 counties in the Diocese of Arlington.

Catholic Charities thanks all who have contributed food and asks for more donations in order to replenish the Christ House pantry shelves after deliveries are made (call 703-841-3838 to help).

Groups that have generously donated non-perishables or funds to the food pantry include Bishop O'Connell High School, Bishop Ireton High School, Oakcrest School, Stoneridge School, Paul VI High School, Our Lady of Good Counsel School, St. Luke's Youth Ministry, St. Mary's Church, St. Thomas More School, and the Scouts.

Recent help at Christ House has come from St. Mark's Youth Ministry, which collected food in June and then had students deliver it to Christ House. The students also bagged food for delivery to families being assisted by the Diocese's Work Camp



Girl Scouts from Troop 2134 of the Church of the Nativity deliver food and flowers to Christ House (top photo). Students from St. Mark's Youth Ministry (bottom photo) help bag food for families being assisted by the Diocese's 2008 Work Camp.

in Orange.

Girl Scouts from Troop 2134 of the Church of the Nativity in Burke also helped the program recently. They arranged and donated Easter baskets for needy children in March and then delivered food and other items, including flowers, in April.

Photo by Ray Plisney



Alexandria Union Cab Company's Randy Stephens (right) presents Catholic Charities' case manager Tom Bransfield with a Community Service Award of \$500 at a June 25 ceremony. The donation will benefit Christ House, one of five recipients of the award.

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### Urgent Call

Contributions of food or cash are needed to restock Christ House food pantry. Call 703-841-3838 if you can help.

Top photo by Jeanne Spaeth; bottom photo by Ray Plisney

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Photos by Jeanne Spaeth

# Catholic Charities Classic Fun under the Sun



International Country Club  
June 30, 2008

Proceeds benefiting Catholic Charities' services