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CATHOLIC CHARITIES Connections

SUPPLEMENT TO ARKANSAS CATHOLIC • CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF ARKANSAS • P.O. BOX 7565 • LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72217 • JUNE 16, 2012

AT A GLANCE Catholic Charities of Arkansas serves

- **Adoption Services:** Birth parent services, adoptive family services and search and reunion
- **Immigration in Northwest Arkansas:** Family-based legal assistance, domestic violence and crime victims services, refugee resettlement, employer trainings, education and advocacy
- **Immigration in Little Rock:** Family-based legal assistance, domestic violence and crime victims services, supporting survivors, legal assistance for foreign national priests, education and advocacy
- **Parish social ministries:** Parish-based ministry development, disaster recovery parish-based teams, parish emergency assistance
- **Social Action:** Prison ministry, Catholic Campaign for Human Development, legislative advocacy, alcohol and drug, Catholic Charities Summer Institute
- **Westside Free Medical Clinic:** Medical and dermatology clinics for noninsured adults, outreach and community education
- **Development:** Grants management, Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Golf Classic, Catholic Relief Services Rice Bowl and St. Nicholas Partners

FOR MORE INFORMATION
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 2500 N. Tyler St.
 Little Rock, AR 72207
 (501) 664-0340
 www.dolr.org

CATHOLIC CHARITIES' MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Catholic Charities of Arkansas of the Diocese of Little Rock is rooted in the challenge of the Gospel: To serve persons who are poor or marginalized; to advocate on behalf of the most vulnerable; and to actively promote charity, justice, and the sanctity of life in the Church and the community.

Harris marks 25th year in adoptions

Director created blessing ceremony, reunification program

Catholic Adoption Services has been blessed to be directed by Antje Harris for a quarter of a century.

Harris, a licensed social worker, was hired by the Diocese of Little Rock on Nov. 3, 1986, and has since brought her client-centered philosophies to the adoption program. She has aided hundreds of adoptive placements and assists the adopted adults she placed now find their birthparents.

The agency was first licensed on May 4, 1984, when the expectations and attitudes of adoption were much different than they are today. Adoption was considered something to keep secret, so there was little communication between the adoptive families and the birthparents. Harris began her journey with adoptions to help it adjust to a more open and interactive process that allows for communication and ongoing support for the birthparents and adoptive families.

Harris encouraged the process by first creating a blessing ceremony to help everyone involved in the adoption process come together to realize their love and support for the infant that is placed for adoption. This creates the groundwork for an ongoing relationship between the two families cemented in the love for the child that they have all placed first in priority.

Harris also improved the foster care policies to make it more open and a better support for the



Director Antje Harris helps unload diapers donated to Abba House by Catholic Adoption Services May 23. Harris routinely assists charitable agencies dedicated to caring for unwed mothers throughout the Diocese of Little Rock.

adoptive family. When Catholic Adoption Services first began its licensed adoption program, foster families did not meet the adoptive families who would become the infant's new parents. The agency would arrange for the infant's transfer. Harris changed the procedure. Now the adoptive families come to the foster parent's homes, where they share a meal and

celebrate the adoption together. The foster parents give information about the baby's care and preferences. This has allowed positive relationships to form, with adoptive parents calling the foster parents for advice and even babysitting.

Harris created a more supportive system for working with birthparents. She wanted to make sure they know we care about them, so

she coined "food therapy" as a way to provide for birthparents. In addition to assisting with the basic needs a birthparent has, counseling is given with meals so they are fed spiritually and physically. The idea of breaking bread with someone is powerful and helps to begin a healthy relationship with the client. They know the agency staff will be there for them throughout their pregnancy and adoption.

Harris also makes certain to provide the opportunity for counseling after an adoption takes

Catholic Adoption Services always protects birthmothers in their right to decide the best plan for their child.

See **ADOPTION** page 11

Government funds put us in a delicate position

As a society wishing and intending to remain in service of humanity is a society that targets both the good of all people and that of the whole person. This is the "common good."

Although we work for the common good of all, there is a particular concern for the poor and those on the margins of society. The goal of working toward the common good is to eliminate

poverty: religious poverty, moral poverty and material poverty.

We Americans are most fortunate among all humanity. In no other place are so many so well off economically, so healthy, so well fed and so comfortable. In relation to the millions of destitute in the Third World, even our poor in America are "wealthy."

The greater one's gifts and the greater one's abilities, the greater one's respon-

sibility to work for the common good. When we work for the common good of all, we are said to be in solidarity with all those in need throughout the world.

The Church teaches the importance of the principal of subsidiarity. Subsidiarity requires the state to support — not dominate — lower levels of government by emphasizing and enhancing their initiative, freedom and responsibility. Excessive state centralization, bureaucratization and welfare assistance destroys subsidiarity.

Robust subsidiarity encourages participation at the local

level. Broad participation works for the common good by keeping political leadership rotating and preventing the establishment of hidden, entrenched elites.

We live now in a society in which the national government is arguably so intrusive that it destroys local authority. This is a national government that uses its power over the public purse and its power to coerce to exert tremendous cultural control to the detriment of those who wish to follow the teachings of Jesus.

Catholic Charities finds itself in

See **FUNDING** page 10



From the Director
 Patrick Gallaher

BRIEFS

GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 18th annual Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Golf Classic will be held Monday, Sept. 17 at the Maumelle Country Club.

Susan Ford is serving as this year's tournament chairwoman.

Player registration brochures will be sent out in mid-July and will also be available on the diocesan website, www.dolr.org.

Entry fees are \$150 a player and \$600 a team. A variety of sponsorship levels is also available, making the Golf Classic a way to promote one's business while supporting the work of Catholic Charities.

The Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Golf Classic is CCA's largest fundraiser, with proceeds supporting all of Catholic Charities' programs. More than 20,000 people each year benefit from Catholic Charities services. For more information, to register or be a sponsor, call Rebecca Cargile at (501) 664-0340, ext. 355.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONFERENCE

On May 2 and 3, Catholic Immigration Services-Little Rock, in conjunction with the Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence, hosted the second annual Victims of Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking Conference.

The conference was held at St. John Center in Little Rock. More than 40 people from social service agencies across the state attended the conference, which consisted of lectures, seminars, panel discussions and exercises. National and local experts gave presentations.

Reagan Stanford, crime victim services specialist, facilitated a panel discussion on human trafficking within the immigrant community. The May 2-3 conference was one in a series that will be held in several locations around the diocese as a part of the Legal Assistance for Victims Grant, funded under the Violence Against Women Act.

Successful refugee



Arley Bejerano, a Cuban who resettled through the Catholic Charities Refugee Program in Springdale, was recently inducted into the Gamma Beta Phi Society for academic excellence at Northwest Arkansas Community College in Bentonville March 16. Bejerano came to Arkansas in March 2010 and is seeking a degree in business.

YOUTH CAMP

The Catholic Charities Social Action Office and Parish Social Ministries Office are working with the diocesan Catholic Youth and Campus Ministries Office once again to host two weeks of social action camps for high school students.

From June 11-14, the first camp, called "Catholic Youth Tour of Duty," was hosted in northwest Arkansas. In its second year, the innovative experience saw campers traveling from parish to parish, sleeping outside at night. Activities during the day centered on learning about social justice and performing service in the community. Campers performed acts of charity, such as working in local food banks and homeless shelters.

The second camp, from July 9-13, is called Catholic Charities Summer Institute. C²SI is in its sixth year. The camp is based at St. John Center in Little Rock. Visits to and work at a homeless shelter, day care center and a youth detention facility are planned.

Scholarships are available. Contact the Youth Ministries Office at (501) 664-0340 for more information.

BLUE ENVELOPE

Donations in the small blue-printed envelopes included in this issue of *Arkansas Catholic* can help Catholic Charities of Arkansas reach out to a variety of people in need. When people approach Catholic Charities for help, they often have a specific need, such as basic medical care, pregnancy counseling or adoption information, immigration services or assistance with drug and alcohol abuse.

In other cases, however, some people with low incomes approach CCA for help with basic needs such as food, paying utility bills or buying prescriptions. The donations CCA receives through the "blue envelope appeal" are put into the Catholic Charities Poor Fund, which is CCA's primary resource for helping people meet basic needs. Recently, the Poor Fund helped CCA pay an overdue electric bill for an elderly

woman; make a mortgage payment for a couple that fell behind after one of them had a stroke and provide shelter for a woman and her children so that they would not have to sleep in their car over Easter weekend.

For more information on the appeal, call Rebecca Cargile at (501) 664-0340, ext. 355.

OPERATION RICE BOWL

Operation Rice Bowl concluded on Easter Sunday. Many individuals, schools and parishes participated.

With money raised through Operation Rice Bowl, Catholic Relief Services work to ease the suffering caused by poverty and hunger worldwide.

Seventy-five percent of what was raised in the Diocese of Little Rock was sent to Catholic Relief Services to support their work worldwide. The remaining funds stay in the Diocese of Little Rock to help the poor served by CCA.

NEW OFFICE MANAGER

Georgina Pena joined Catholic Immigration Services-Little Rock as the office manager this past winter. She works closely with all of the staff in the immigration office and greets clients coming to visit the Catholic Charities office at St. John Center.



Georgina Pena

HEALTH FAIR

Flor Lopez, program specialist for the Westside Free Medical Clinic in Little Rock, participated in a health fair in Dardanelle May 20. The Health Fair was presented by a consortium of groups and individuals in order to give people in Dardanelle, especially the immigrant community, a chance to receive information and participate in activities related to maintaining healthy habits. Lopez administered blood glucose screenings to many people.

Funding

Continued from page 9

an untenable position. If it relies on government funding, it must do the things the government chooses for it to do and in the manner the government directs. If Catholic Charities rejects government funding or has it denied and attempts to focus on the traditional core missions detailed in the works of mercy, it risks doing so without adequate funding.

Individual Catholics must give of their personal wealth and their time to work for the common good. Catholic families must tithe. Parishes must be tithing congregations and participate in the life of their surrounding communities. Participation in parish and community activities is critical. Catholics must work hard together to take care of their communities — this will ensure we maintain our freedom.

Catholic Charities finds itself in an untenable position. If it relies on government funding, it must do the things the government chooses for it to do and in the manner the government directs. If Catholic Charities rejects government funding or has it denied and attempts to focus on the traditional core missions detailed in the works of mercy, it risks doing so without adequate funding.

Learn about the new School of Spiritual Direction



Have you ever felt like God was calling you to walk with someone else on their spiritual journey? If so, the Diocese of Little Rock School of Spiritual Direction might be for you. See the dates below to find an informational meeting in your area. Please contact Chuck Ashburn at cashburn@dolr.org or 501-664-0340, ext. 368, to register for one of these meetings.

Little Rock: Wednesday, June 20, 6:30 - 8 p.m. at St. John Center, Fitzgerald Hall

Fort Smith: Monday, June 25, 6:30 - 8 p.m. at Immaculate Conception, St. Anne's Hall

Jonesboro: Wednesday, June 27, 6:30 - 8 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament

Hope: Saturday, June 30, 2 - 3:30 p.m. at Our Lady of Good Hope

Rogers: Monday, July 16, 6:30 - 8 p.m. at St. Vincent DePaul, SVdP Hall

Pine Bluff: Sunday, July 22, 2 - 3:30 p.m. at St. Joseph



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Reserve now at only \$13 and get yours as soon as they arrive in September, full of information about your diocese and its clergy, religious, lay leaders, parishes and ministries. Send this order form with your check or money order to Directory, Arkansas Catholic, P.O. Box 2536, Little Rock AR 72203.

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Adoption

Continued from page 9

place. With proper consent, she often meets birthmothers for lunch to provide pictures of their child from the adoptive family.

Catholic Adoption Services always protects birthmothers in their right to decide the best plan for their child. Harris deeply respects this tenet and feels that a decision for adoption is one of the hardest choices a woman can make, and she has kept this as a foundation for her work with the women who seek adoption services.

Agency staff never place any pressure on clients to make a plan for adoption. Adoption is presented as a loving alternative. Women are given the chance to review families and pick the one they feel would be best. They almost always meet the family to decide if they are the right ones to parent their child. A birthmother also has five or 10 days after she signs an adoption consent to change her mind, and the agency honors that right.

Harris has been the cornerstone of the search-and-reunion program that helps adoptees and birthparents reconnect. She now has the privilege of seeing the adoptees she placed as infants grow into adults and works with them to find their birth families. It is not always an easy route as clients do not always stay in contact and often change their names when they marry.

Harris has sought training to help her in her searches and now has a number of tools to help her track down old clients. In Arkansas all reunion services are provided by mutual consent only, so they can only be offered to clients and it is their choice to meet or not. Sometimes a birthmother is not ready to be "found," but they know they have that option and that the agency will be here for them when they are ready. When a reunion does take place both parties are counseled and guided through the process so it is as positive an experience for all involved as possible.

Harris has worked hard in the past 25 years to celebrate the gift of adoption and encourage community awareness. She has reached out to schools, hospitals, pregnancy resource centers and group homes to teach them about adoption and to clear up misunderstandings that may exist. She is a founding member and treasurer of the Arkansas Adoption Association, an organization created to bring adoption professionals together to promote positive adoption services.

She also is a lobbyist who works with state officials to enact laws that support adoption and protect clients. On Sept. 23, 2004, Harris was presented with the Congressional Angels in Adoption Award recognizing her dedication and achievements in promoting adoption.

While the debate about insurance goes on, what we need is real health care reform

Catholic Charities sponsors our Westside Free Medical Clinic in the diocese. It is for persons without access to full health care and treats basic family practice conditions. These past few years we have experienced an increase for patient services due to the economy, especially for persons who have always had the benefit of our medical system and now have nowhere to turn. We now have a two-month backlog.

My experience as the clinic director since 1989 has led me to heartily encourage the introduction of reform for a new delivery system of health care and cost reform. This is a different focus from current health care reform efforts where a large portion of the debate centers on who will pay for health care. That is insurance reform and not health care reform.

The cost of health care has escalated astronomically in the last 20 years. If cost containment is a main goal, I would like to see more discussion surrounding the actual cost of medical care. There has been some headway with the recent grouping of treatment plans at one flat cost instead of separate little costs and while it is a first step, there are other cost-saving measures.

Charitable clinics are often backlogged several months for chronic disease care. Some of the patients we see cannot afford the charge of \$100 or more to be seen in a private practice and are trying to avoid the emergency room for non-emergency care. They also cannot afford the \$60 fee for the new walk-in clinics either. However, they might afford a sliding scale cost of \$25 to \$35. In Pulaski



Karen DiPippa

County we only have two sliding-scale clinics and they are also backlogged. We need more low-cost clinics across the state without sacrificing the care given at these clinics.

Reforming the standard trend to over-test and over-treat patients with insurance would best be designed by those in the medical field, but other considerations might also work to lower costs. For example, a lesser means of testing could provide the same necessary information for treatment in a majority of cases. Hospitals and

offices could share equipment to offset the costs of the medical testing and subsequent lesser volume of testing. Standardized hospital pricing alone would ensure reasonable pricing for like procedures.

High-priced pharmaceuticals hinder patient well-being also. Pharmaceutical companies base their prices on the cost of research, but costs for newly developed medicines sometimes outweigh the benefits if insured persons cannot afford the co-pay or uninsured patients cannot obtain lifesaving medicines.

Have we priced our medical system out of reach to meet the Catholic social teaching tenet of adequate health care?

True health care reform would

also put responsibility for one's health on the individual as much as the medical profession or insurance companies. We cannot prevent conditions beyond our control or will or choose our genetics, but we can take responsibility for our health with more conscientious daily choices whether we have insurance or not. It could make a difference in high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke and heart attack incidents.

Until then, clinics like Westside will continue to serve patients lost in the middle as well as those persons who truly cannot afford a \$4 medicine.

Karen DiPippa is director of Catholic Charities' Westside Free Medical Clinic in Little Rock.

Have we priced our medical system out of reach to meet the Catholic social teaching tenet of adequate health care?



For more information on how you can help Catholic Charities of Arkansas as a volunteer or to make a donation, call (501) 664-0340 in Little Rock or (479) 927-1996 in Springdale.

Supporting Survivors of Domestic Violence: Care bag items for children and families including new or gently-used stuffed animals, toys and art supplies; hygiene items (soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, razors, feminine products, toothpaste, toothbrushes); women's and children's shoes/clothing of all sizes or funds to purchase them. Contact

Maricella Garcia.

Disaster Recovery: Parishes willing to develop teams to assist their neighbors through long-term recovery activities can receive training. Contact Tom Navin.

Immigration Services Offices in Little Rock and Springdale: Volunteer attorneys to assist with complex immigration cases; attorneys for civil legal issues, help to catalog files for digital storage; five-drawer lateral file cabinets for storage of paper files. Contact Maricella Garcia in Little Rock or Frank Head in Springdale.



Can YOU help?

Prison Ministry: Spiritual books are appreciated by many prisoners and volunteers are needed to serve the spiritual and religious needs of Catholic inmates. Contact Tom Navin

Refugee Resettlement:

Donated used cars are needed by families as they settle into their new homeland and move toward citizenship. Contact Frank Head.

Westside Free Medical Clinic: Volunteers are needed, including medical specialists willing to take referrals in their private practice, physicians, pharmacists, bilingual receptionists, bilingual dieticians and bilingual diabetic educators. Day volunteers are needed to interpret for patients at appointments arranged through the clinic. Contact Karen DiPippa.