




CATHOLIC CHARITIES NEWS

Volume 9, Number 2

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Venice, Inc.

Winter 2009-2010

Annual Christmas Appeal Needs You to Help

The eighth annual Catholic Charities Christmas Appeal needs your support to *provide help and create hope* for children, families and individuals who seek our help. The Christmas Appeal takes place during the month of December through January 2010. This year's goal is \$350,000.

Your gifts provide funding for programs and services of Catholic Charities in southwest Florida. Through your generosity, our 34 program sites are able to serve clients all year long.

Please read this newsletter to learn more about how your donations help God's people. On page 5 is a list of our program sites, and on pages 6-7 is additional information about some of our Catholic Charities services.

Christmas Appeal on page 6



St. Francis Xavier Students "Dress Out" for CC Senior Connections

Fort Myers – On Friday, September 25, the Student Council of St. Francis Xavier School dedicated the Mission Day to the Senior Connections program of Catholic Charities (CC) in Lee County. In order to "dress out" of uniform

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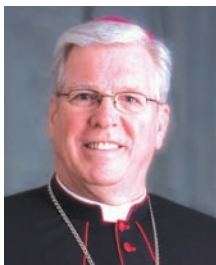
St. Francis Xavier School Student Council officers (L to R): Danny Tufariello, president; Ryan McIltrout, vice president; Ellie Bowden, secretary; Brooke Palmer, treasurer.

Charitable IRA Rollover Expires December 31, 2009

A charitable opportunity allowing qualified individuals to make tax-free distributions from their IRAs directly to Catholic Charities ends on 12/31/2009.

Adults age 70 and 1/2 or older can transfer up to \$100,000 from their individual retirement

IRA Rollover on page 3



Most Rev. Frank J. Dewane
Bishop

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www.catholiccharitiesdov.org

“One of Best Ever”

Naples – This year’s collection on Undy Sundays was “one of the best ever,” said John Fitzgerald, volunteer co-founder and co-chair of the Catholic Charities (CC) of Collier County event.

For the 13th consecutive year, Collier County churches and synagogues asked their members to donate new underwear and socks for needy school-aged children. Nearly 50 churches and synagogues participated on two weekends in August.

The “undies” for boys and girls, sizes 6–12, were distributed to about 20 area

schools and five social service agencies. These groups, in turn, give the undies to needy children during the school year.

This year \$5,000 was also donated and is being used to purchase underwear, backpacks, school supplies and other items of need for children.

Fitzgerald and co-chair Lew Schmidt thank the donors, the students of St. John Neumann High School and all the volunteers who collect, sort and distribute these necessities to children in need. Fitzgerald and Schmidt are advisory board members for CC of Collier County.



John Fitzgerald rests after working all day with donations of “undies.”

Quinceanera Celebration

Arcadia – This year the Sarasota Latin Chamber of Commerce invited Catholic Charities (CC) of DeSoto County to ask girls to apply to attend a Quinceanera celebration. *Quinceanera* means *fifteen years* in English. The celebration is a coming-of-age event for Latino girls.

Maria Santillan-Maton, CC educational coordinator in Arcadia, solicited families and assisted with the application process. Each girl submitted an essay of a self-description and her aspirations. GPA was also a selection factor.

Of three girls chosen to participate, two were former CC After School Program students.

Santillan-Maton accompanied the girls to Sarasota for preparatory classes in charm, dancing, self-confidence, personal appearance and financial planning for college. She also served as liaison between the event coordinator and the families.

The Quinceanera dinner dance was on August 6 with 15 participants. The young women wore floor-length gowns and were escorted, in most cases, by a family member. Each young woman was honored and presented a 500-dollar scholarship.

St. Francis from page 1

that day, students brought a donation of toiletries or \$1.00 to school.

Every month the Student Council meets with class officers to determine the purpose of “dress out” days, according to Jim Reynolds, assistant principal. Enrollment at the school is 580, pre-kindergarten through eighth grade.

In addition to large boxes of personal care items, the students contributed \$300 in cash to

Senior Connections.

The goal of CC Senior Connections is to help frail senior adults who are in need of assistance to stay independent in their homes. The CC program provides help to these adults with daily living tasks. Besides living on a low fixed income, these seniors are physically unable to care fully for their daily needs such as bathing, meal preparation, housekeeping.

For more information about Senior Connections, call Mary Lewis at 239-334-2234.



Volunteer Spotlight: Connie Ferguson

Bradenton – Connie Ferguson “looks forward to Thursdays” because she says “helping people is how I like to spend my time.” For more than two years she has volunteered for Catholic Charities (CC) of Manatee County.

“I volunteer every Thursday from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m.,” Ferguson said. “I am the person who answers the phone, greets the clients, answers their initial questions, and finds out what they need, so they do not wait unnecessarily or fill out the wrong forms.”

Recently Ferguson calmly and patiently attended to the needs of 12 people at the same time, often switching back and forth from speaking Spanish and French to Hispanic and Haitian clients respectively.

In addition to managing the front desk, Ferguson tutors students enrolled in the Citizenship Classes to prepare for the U.S. Citizenship Test. She is also a member of the Salsa Steps committee, a fundraising event for the Foreclosure Prevention and Housing Program.



CC of Manatee County offers Immigration Services, Citizenship Classes, Financial Assistance, and Foreclosure Prevention and Housing Counseling. Many clients in need of these programs often are new to the country and Ferguson feels a connection to them.

“I know how they feel to be in a foreign land,” Ferguson said. “I moved around as a child every four years because my dad worked for the U.S. State Department.” She grew up mostly in Europe in places like Barcelona and Brussels.

“I first lived in the United States when I was 16 years old,” Ferguson said. “I attended a public school in Virginia after only attending Catholic or private schools in Europe.”

Ferguson often attends the swearing-in ceremony for her students who pass the U.S. Citizenship Test. “A tutor typically spends two to four months working with students on a weekly basis, so you really come to care about them. They are like one of your own children, no matter how old they are,” Ferguson said.

An active volunteer at her church and her daughter’s school when she was growing up, Ferguson has been married 32 years and lives in Parrish. She is a member of Sacred Heart Parish in Bradenton, which is located right next door to Catholic Charities of Manatee County. “This is my dedication. All my life, I have always wanted to help people,” Ferguson said.

Catholic Charities of Manatee County needs volunteers for office work, tutors for Citizenship Classes, and assistance with fundraising events. For more information, call the office at 941-714-7829.

Wish List

Bonita Springs – Call Rich, (239) 390-0687.

- Computer (desktop or laptop) for after school/summer camp program
- 6-foot heavy duty, folding utility table & 4 folding chairs

Bradenton – Call Yraida at (941) 714-7829.

- bilingual (English-Spanish) volunteer
- DVD player for Citizenship classes

Fort Myers – Call Ellen, (239) 337-4193 ext. 301.

- diapers
- non-perishable food for food pantry

Immokalee – Call Ninfa, (239) 657-6242.

- desk
- fans for clients

Venice – Call Joyce, (941) 485-6264.

- reliable used car
 - diapers, sizes 4 & 6
- Call Yuri, (941) 492-4855.
- regular-sized refrigerator & dryer
 - cars, in good running condition, for clients

*Thank you for any help
you can give.*

IRA Rollover on page 3

account (IRA) to a qualified charity, such as Catholic Charities, without incurring income tax on the withdrawal.

To learn how you can make this special gift, contact Catholic Charities Foundation, Toll-Free 1-866-410-7656.

“WALK for the Way” for UW

Collier County – The 2nd Annual United Way (UW) “WALK for the Way” took place at North Collier Regional Park on September 28. The fundraising walk of 2.5 miles helps support 28 social service agencies and raised \$45,000.

The team from Catholic Charities (CC) of Collier County included CC staff, volunteers and family members. As the team with the largest number of walkers from any agency, CC won a catered lunch from Jason’s Deli. Yea, CC Team!



Bob Saunders, district director, CC-Collier County (in background) with other CC staff walkers (L to R): Tery Delgado, Daisy Duran, Raquel Gonzalez, Sharon Kirkpatrick, Debra Hoefling, Martha Gallego.



Volunteers Needed!

Immokalee – School on Wheels of Catholic Charities is an English as a second language program that is held in the homes of migrant or other disadvantaged women. The women cannot go anywhere else to learn English because they have small children and/or lack transportation. The need for these women to speak English is essential to their survival.

Once a week, female volunteer tutors teach needy women basic, survival English during 90-minute sessions. These lessons

empower students to take better care of their families, gain employment, talk to teachers or doctors—to become more self-sufficient. The program currently has a waiting list of students because volunteer tutors are needed.

“We provide the female volunteers training and support, and a tutor does *not* need to speak Spanish,” said Helen Heffington, School on Wheels education director.

Heffington recalled a student named Carmen who had a child

that needed to be hospitalized. “Carmen’s child had to translate for her to the doctors,” Heffington said. “Because School on Wheels can be individualized, we focused on her learning to communicate with the doctors and how to take the bus to the hospital to visit her child.”

The goal of the program is to empower women and give them confidence so they can lead better lives. For more information, call Helen Heffington at Guadalupe Social Services of Catholic Charities at 239-657-6242.



MASS CARDS*
Send 2 samples of the new Mass cards from the Guild.

** Please enclose \$1.00 to help with postage.*

WILLS WORKSHEETS
Send a set of wills worksheets, for those without a will or updating one.

The Good Samaritan Guild

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

MAIL TO: Catholic Charities Foundation
6900-29 Daniels Pkwy, Box 334, Fort Myers, FL 33912
OR - Call Toll-Free 1-866-410-7656
www.ccfdsnswfl.org



Catholic Charities

1000 Pinebrook Road
 Venice, FL 34285
 (941) 488-5581 • (941) 484-9543
 www.catholiccharitiesdov.org

Disaster Preparedness & Response

Arcadia

Catholic Charities of DeSoto County
 & Immigration Services

Bonita Springs

Hispanic Services of Catholic Charities

Bradenton

Catholic Charities of Manatee County
 Immigration & Housing Counseling

Clewiston

Catholic Charities of Hendry/Glades Counties

Fort Myers

AFCAAM
 "Choose Life" License Plate Program
 Clare House of Catholic Charities
 Community Counseling Services
 Haitian Center
 HIV/AIDS Services
 Human Trafficking
 Immigration & Refugee Services
 Senior Connections
 The Elizabeth Kay Galeana Center

Hardee & Highlands Counties

Food Assistance

Immokalee

Guadalupe Social Services of Catholic Charities

LaBelle

Catholic Charities of Hendry/Glades Counties

Naples

Family Counseling Services
 Family Resource Center
 Refugee Related Services
 Refugee Youth & Family Programs

Palmetto

Elderly Outreach Services

Port Charlotte/Punta Gorda

Outreach & HIV/AIDS Services
 Counseling

Sarasota

Bethesda House (HIV/AIDS)
 Casa San Jose (HIV/AIDS)
 Direct Assistance Services
 Family Counseling Services
 Refugee Related Services
 St. Martha's Early Learning Center

Venice

Elderly Outreach Services
 Our Mother's House of Catholic Charities
 Refugee Resettlement Program

Wauchula

Administration of FEMA Funds



CREDIBILITY • INTEGRITY • ACHIEVEMENT

CEO's Corner



As Christmas approaches, all of us are busy with the season's preparations and events. At Catholic Charities our employees are working hard to help children, families and individuals to have a good Christmas.

Most importantly, we help people in need to be able to pay essential bills and eventually to move toward self-sufficiency. With unemployment so high, many families and individuals struggle and cannot afford food, rent/mortgages, utilities, prescriptions.

Many of our current clients have never before had to ask a charity for help. They come through our doors feeling very apprehensive.

Even people who previously donated to our work are now seeking assistance. Every day our Catholic Charities programs strive to *provide help and create hope* for our clients.

All year we depend on your donations to support our work with people here in southwest Florida.

Please give a gift to the Christmas Appeal to help children, families and individuals who need help ... and hope.

In advance, thank you for your support of Catholic Charities. Please pray for our work.

May the good Lord bless you,

Peter Routsis-Arroyo
 Chief Executive Officer

To see a listing of our Boards of Directors, visit our website at www.catholiccharitiesdov.org

Upcoming Events

- December** **Catholic Charities Annual Christmas Appeal.** Watch for our letter in your mailbox.
- January** **Annual Hunger Walk** for Catholic Charities, The Elizabeth Kay Galeana Center. January 23, 2010; Miromar Outlets. To register, arrive at 8:00 a.m. or visit harrychapinfoodbank.org.
- Sarasota** **Catholic Charities Ball** for Catholic Charities of Sarasota & Manatee Counties. Saturday, January 30, 2010; Ritz Carlton. For tickets call 941-379-9111.
- February** **"Boots and Bandannas" Dinner Dance** for Catholic Charities of DeSoto County. Saturday, February 20, 2010; Mission Valley Country Club. For tickets call 863-494-1068.
- Venice** **Our Mother's House Wine Tasting & Dinner Auction** for Our Mother's House of Catholic Charities. Thursday, February 25, 2010; Plantation Golf and Country Club. For tickets call 941-485-6264.
- Fort Myers** **Venetian Charity Ball** for Catholic Charities of Lee County. Saturday, February 27, 2010; Harbourside Event Center. For tickets call 239-334-4007.
- March** **Emerald Ball** for Catholic Charities of Collier County. Saturday, March 20, 2010; Ritz Carlton Golf Resort. For tickets call 239-455-2655.

Christmas Appeal from page 1

Providing Help . . .

These brief descriptions are of only a few of our many programs and services that you support through your gifts to the Christmas Appeal.



Our Mother's House of Catholic Charities in Venice

Single Mothers

At Our Mother's House of Catholic Charities in Venice, a single, homeless mother and baby seek shelter and services. Required classes in budgeting and parenting help her learn to live independently.

A working single mother comes to our Family Resource Center in Naples for food and assistance with her utility bill. She and her children need your help in order to make ends meet this Christmas.

Counseling

Mental health counseling services are available for everyone at Catholic Charities offices in Fort Myers, Naples, Sarasota and Venice. A sliding fee scale is available for those in need.

Financial Assistance

In Sarasota and Manatee Counties, hundreds of needy families seek crisis assistance to help with rent/mortgages, utility bills and critical prescription medicines. Catholic Charities does the most with limited resources. Many times during the past year we ran out of direct assistance funds prior to the end of the month.

Expectant Mothers

Today in Lee County, we are helping young mothers whose babies need clothing, diapers and other material needs. The Baby Room in the Clare House building of Catholic Charities serves these struggling young families who are trying to make a better tomorrow for their toddlers and newborns.



AFCAAM of Catholic Charities in Fort Myers



Laura Sikes/Catholic Charities USA

Seniors

In Sarasota a Catholic Charities caseworker assists residents with case management services in two senior housing facilities of the diocese.

In Lee County senior adults receive telephone reassurances daily and support services through Senior Connections.

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Christmas Appeal from page 6

... Creating Hope



Catholic Charities of Lee County

Migrant Worker Families

In the Arcadia area, migrant worker families come to our Catholic Charities of DeSoto County seeking the most basic of survival needs. We help by providing food from our small pantry, donated clothes for children and adults, and small amounts of direct assistance.

Families & Children

In Fort Myers and Bonita Springs, the programs of Catholic Charities of Lee County focus on the needs of children and families with food pantries, case management, financial assistance, after-school tutoring, and other support services.

Early Learning

In downtown Sarasota, the new St. Martha's Early Learning Center provides preschool with developmental, educational and social components for children, ages 16 months to 5 years. Many of these parents each work two jobs to make their limited budget work.



Laura Sikes/Catholic Charities USA



YES, I will help Catholic Charities!

Christmas Appeal

I am pleased to enclose my tax-deductible gift to the Christmas Appeal.

_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$200 \$_____ Other

OR Please charge my Visa MC AmEx Discover

Credit Card # _____

Amount \$ _____ Expiration date _____ / _____

Signature _____ (Required for credit card approval.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____ E-mail _____



I will be making a gift

monthly quarterly

Please send a reminder notice.

Special Intentions of My Gift

In Honor of

In Memory of

(Please see reverse side)

Providing Help. Creating Hope.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Annual Christmas Appeal
We Use Your Gifts Wisely



At Catholic Charities, we put your gifts to work in our communities in southwest Florida. A full 93 cents of every dollar from the Christmas Appeal 2009 will be used to help those who need help the most.

Last year Catholic Charities served more than 40,000 children, families and individuals.

Whom do we serve? They are needy children, the lonely elderly, the migrant farm worker, the refugee, and the family in crisis. They are all God's children.



Catholic Charities
Diocese of Venice
P.O. Box 2116
Venice, FL 34284-2116

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**Emergency Financial Assistance • Food Pantries • Tutoring
Early Learning • Mental Health Counseling
Residential Care for Mothers & Children**

Catholic Charities serves and empowers ALL in need,
regardless of race, nationality or creed.



**We ask for your help - because they can't.
Please give generously.**

YOUR GIFT AT WORK

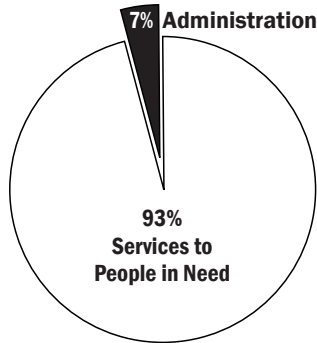
My gift to Catholic Charities Christmas Appeal is to honor:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please send a special greeting in my/our name.



Providing Help. Creating Hope.

Clip and mail to: Catholic Charities • 6900-29 Daniels Pkwy, Box 334 • Ft. Myers, FL 33912