

THE GOOD NEWS

FALL 2013

A QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER



Faces may change, but the superior leadership continues

Five new leaders, three of them former corporate executives, have recently signed on to head or help lead Catholic Charities agencies.

After five productive years, **Tim Sullivan** will retire in mid-October as executive director of **Catholic Charities of Wayne County**. Tim has decided to head back home to Tulsa, Oklahoma to spend more time with his children and grandchildren.

Tim led the Wayne County agency to outstanding achievements, especially in raising funds for and bolstering the management of LaCasa; opening the thriving Wolcott clothing center; and most recently, securing substantial funding to support the current anti-bullying campaign.

Succeeding Tim as Wayne County executive director is **Peter Dohr**, a longtime Catholic Charities supporter and a Catholic deacon. Peter brings to his new position an outstanding blend of Catholic compassion and good old American business savvy. He holds a master's degree in pastoral studies from St. Bernard's and operates Peter S. Dohr & Associates, a consultancy specializing in turning personal and family struggles into successes. He also spent 30 years as a very successful real-estate management executive, most recently as a senior vice president of Baldwin Real Estate Corporation in Rochester.

At Catholic Charities agencies in **Livingston and Chemung/**



Peter Dohr

Schuyler counties, two executives who distinguished themselves as associate directors were promoted based on outstanding performance. We welcome **Tabitha Brewster** (Livingston) and **Chuck Nocera** (Chemung/ Schuyler) and wish them well in their new role.

At **Catholic Family Center**, former Xerox executive **Marlene Bessette** steps into a new role as chief operating officer. Marlene

now oversees all programs, including adoption, foster care, adult protective and guardianship, homeless shelters, refugee resettlement, employment preparation, mental health counseling, chemical dependency counseling, in-home services for older adults, prison re-entry and interpreter services.

Before joining CFC, Marlene spent 28 years in a variety of senior management roles at Xerox, where she was most recently vice president of strategy and customer loyalty for U.S. Technical Services. She became acquainted with Catholic Charities



Marlene Bessette

through Xerox's community-service leave program.

And at affiliate agency **Providence Housing Development Corporation**, **John McDermott** has stepped in to replace outgoing executive director Monica McCullough, who moved on to Pathstone after more than seven years of outstanding service to Catholic Charities.

McDermott, of Fairport, brings a wide range of senior-management skills to the role. Most recently he served as general manager of WS Packaging-Label World, and as president and CEO of its predecessor, Label World. Prior to those assignments, he worked in various management capacities for more than two decades, primarily overseas, at Eastman Kodak Company.

"We are blessed and delighted to be the kind of organization that attracts such a strong roster of leadership talent," said Jack Balinsky, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rochester Director.



John McDermott



Tabitha Brewster



Chuck Nocera

"Each of our new executives has quickly come up to speed and is effectively spearheading our mission of helping individuals and families in need. Bless them all." — Jack Balinsky, *CCDR Director*

REGIONAL ROUNDUP

Good news from around the diocese

Catholic Charities of Livingston County

On September 24, Bill Lissow, a longtime supporter, board member, and former board chair, became the 2013 recipient of the Fr. William Trott Community Services award. The award is presented annually to an individual who demonstrates the kindness, compassion, and sense of social justice for which Fr. Trott – late pastor of St. Joseph's in Livonia and St. William's in Conesus – was widely known. In addition to his board service, Bill and his wife Nancy donated tremendous time, energy and skill as volunteers for the 1999 Catholic Charities USA annual meeting; and in 2012, he spearheaded the reinvigoration of the Livingston County furniture donation program.



Catholic Charities of Steuben County

The agency's Back to School drive was a tremendous success, with more than 550 backpacks delivered to children in need throughout Steuben County.



Catholic Charities of Wayne County

Exiting in grand style, one of Tim Sullivan's last official pre-retirement acts was to secure a \$75,000 grant from the Bullis Foundation to create and support the agency's new anti-bullying campaign. The campaign, centered on students in Palmyra and Macedon schools, seeks to raise awareness and provide education for both students and parents about the dangers of bullying. Among the programs being developed over the year is the establishment of "safe zones" in community businesses and public places where bullying will not be tolerated. Other programs include training for both students and parents on the value of anonymous reporting and dealing with bullying behaviors. Individual counseling will also be offered.



Food Bank of the Southern Tier

In August, the agency's capital campaign reached its goal of \$5.75 million. This outpouring of generosity will enable the agency to achieve its objective of doubling the amount of food distributed to needy families throughout the Southern Tier, from eight million pounds per year to 16 million pounds. The completed first phase of the campaign will support the acquisition and renovation of a warehouse/office facility four times the size of the previous space. The \$1.75 million second phase will help expand the agency's Back Pack Program™ to help provide nutritious meals for thousands more children throughout the Southern Tier.



Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga Counties

Simultaneously feeding the hungry (donors) and helping the poor, Fr. Joe Marcoux hosted a gourmet spaghetti supper for which he not only donated all food and beverages but also prepared the meal. There was no set price for attendance, but the select list of invited guests donated generously to keep the agency healthy.



Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes

The agency became one of only 25 not-for-profit agencies nationwide to receive a \$10,000 grant from the New York Life Charitable Foundation in support of its parenting case management programs.... And it's now Doctor Wayne. Executive Director Ellen Wayne received her doctorate in education from St. John Fisher College in May. Her dissertation dealt with how employees of Catholic organizations perceive their Catholicism.

Catholic Family Center

Since the last issue of *The Good News*, the agency has received:

- \$10,000 from the Women's Circle for Healthy Sisters
- \$5,000 from the Wilson Foundation for Sanctuary House capital improvements
- \$5,750 from the tasting room of North American Breweries
- a grant from the Davenport-Hatch Foundation for capital improvements
- and \$48,000 from Monroe County for drug and alcohol treatment services



Catholic Charities Community Services

To accommodate a growing need for services in Steuben and Yates counties, the agency will significantly expand its presence in Penn Yan. The larger office will also incorporate an expanded presence of the Kinship Division of Catholic Charities of Steuben County.... The agency also moved its Rochester headquarters to Water Tower Park, where additional space was available to meet a growing need for its services to developmentally delayed and traumatically brain-injured individuals, the elderly, and those suffering from AIDS. The new address is 1099 Jay Street, Building J, Rochester, NY 14611. Phone: 585-339-9800. Fax: 585-339-9377. TTY: 585-339-9806. Email: cccs@dor.org



Catholic Charities of Chemung/Schuyler Counties

The agency is taking the next step in its continuing efforts to better serve the homeless through the reconvening of the Chemung County Housing Task Force as part of the five-county Continuum of Care.

DIOCESAN PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Wielding the power of advocacy



In 1972, Catholic Charities USA adopted a three-fold mission statement that has guided the work of Diocesan Catholic Charities agencies ever since:

- Providing professional direct services which empower individuals and families
- Advocating for public-policy priorities which enable persons to move forward toward achieving their fullest human potential
- Collaborating with faith communities of all denominations to address neighborhood and community issues

In 1992, recognizing that according to the 1971 World Synod of Bishops, “advocacy on behalf of social justice is a constitutive element of the preaching of the Gospel,” Bishop Emeritus Matthew Clark established the Diocesan Public Policy Committee to assist him in determining diocesan public-policy priorities and developing an advocacy implementation plan. While the members of the Committee are broadly representative of the diocese, Catholic Charities employees provide staff for the group’s work.

Fr. Brian Cool has been committee chairperson for the last 16 years.

Two major issues that the committee has addressed in 2013, and will continue to address, are advocacy against expanded abortion legislation and advocacy for comprehensive immigration reform. Here are some recent results of those efforts.

Abortion Legislation

If you’ve ever doubted the power of spiritually united individuals to effect change, consider what recently happened in the New York State Senate.

Governor Cuomo had actively lobbied for legislators to pass the Women’s Equality Act. It looked like a slam dunk. Nine of the Act’s 10 points were favorable to women. They included provisions for ending pregnancy discrimination in housing, supports for ending domestic violence, and equal pay for equal work.

But the tenth point—abortion expansion clauses—rallied some legislators to chant, “It’s her body, it’s her choice.”

Through the local work of the Diocesan Public Policy Committee and the larger effort of the New York State Catholic Conference,

pro-life advocates mobilized and the legislation was stopped before it could even reach the floor of the Senate.

This stunning victory may be attributed to the following:

- **Collaboration:** Pro-life individuals and organizations in NYS and throughout the nation pooled their resources. The NYS Catholic Conference collaborated with Citizens for Constitutional Freedom on media coverage and lobbying. Foundations funded and provided the communication infrastructure. Everyone was encouraged to contribute.
- **Education:** Legislators, parishioners and the public needed factual information regarding the nature of the bill and its impact on women and children. The multimedia messaging to that effect was clear, concise, and prompt.
- **Mobilization:** Organizations like the Knights of Columbus, Rochester Area Right to Life, and Feminists for Choosing Life harnessed their membership energy and communicated important information quickly through e-mail and social media. Proponents rallied during legislative visits throughout the spring.

The Catholic community was essential to the success of this effort. Catholic social teaching on the dignity of each human life bore the fruit of a powerful commitment to ensuring that the right to life was respected. And the power of the Holy Spirit, with the gifts of knowledge, fortitude, counsel and understanding, allowed victory against overwhelming odds.

Immigration Reform

Acknowledging that Jesus was an itinerant, Catholics believe that all human beings are children of God,



sharing a spiritual union that transcends the geographical or political borders within which they are born.

It is this belief that prompted Pope John Paul II to declare in 1985 that, “When there are just reasons in favor of it, (every human being) must be permitted to migrate to other countries and to take up residence there. The fact that he is a citizen of a particular state does not deprive him of membership in the human family, nor of citizenship in the universal society, the common, worldwide fellowship of men.”

The staff of the Diocesan Public Policy Committee advocates justice for immigrants by developing a wide range of resources designed to provide education and promote understanding of and compassion for the immigrant experience in the United States. Included are creative ways

for individuals, parishes, and other interested organizations to help legal immigrant individuals and families build a better life in the U.S.

This summer, the committee distributed a wide range of information, some self-generated and some supplied by the national Justice for Immigrants (JFI) movement. Their ideas for parish involvement included recommendations of specific prayers, activities, music, and movies, as well as many suggestions for homilies based on appropriate scriptural passages.

The committee also assisted in building awareness for the JFI Electronic Postcard Campaign, a mass movement encouraging legislators to pass the much-needed immigration reform legislation now on their agenda.



Ellis Island, New York

To keep up with the Diocesan Public Policy Committee’s tireless efforts, please add your name to the e-mail distribution list for the Catholic Family Center newsletter, *Salt & Light*, produced by Ruth Marchetti. rmarchetti@dor.org

Catholic Charities USA and the NYS Council of Catholic Charities Directors

From the Diocesan Director



- and to provide technical assistance on a variety of administrative and program issues, particularly to smaller diocesan Catholic Charities agencies

One example of the significant role this organization has played in the history of our country is the widely held belief that for three decades in the early and mid 1900s, no piece of child social-welfare legislation was passed by Congress without the imprimatur of Monsignor John O’Grady, long-time national Catholic Charities USA director.

The New York State Conference of Bishops was established in 1916, and from its earliest days, diocesan Catholic Charities directors played a significant role in its evolution.

The State Council of Catholic Charities Directors was established as a constituent group of the State Conference of Bishops in 1966. This group enables the state Catholic Charities community and the state Bishops to speak with one voice on life issues and social justice policy issues. The Council is also a convening forum for sharing common challenges, issues, and ideas.

These two organizations play an important role in our work. We introduce them here and will refer to them often.

— Jack Balinsky

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rochester is a member of two important organizations that forward our mission at national and state levels.

Catholic Charities USA (originally known as the National Conference of Catholic Charities Directors) was founded in 1910, when 50 diocesan Catholic Charities leaders from around the U.S. came together for the first time in Washington, DC.

The organization’s three major purposes are:

- to enable the national Catholic Charities community to speak with one voice on federal public policy issues
- to provide a convening forum where Catholic Charities leaders from different dioceses can come together to discuss common issues

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By including Catholic Charities in your will, you can realize immediate tax benefits and help ensure a lasting legacy. Your bequest will help us continue to serve more than 250,000 people in need every year, right here in the Diocese of Rochester.

There’s nothing like doing well by doing good.

For more information, please call 585-328-3210 or e-mail CCDRinfo@dor.org.



Thank you. Bless you.



THE GOOD NEWS

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

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