



Catholic Charities Names New Director

Karen A. Dehais will lead a 12-county organization that serves more than 250,000 people annually



Karen A. Dehais

ROCHESTER, New York (November 16, 2021) – Ms. Karen A. Dehais has been appointed diocesan director and president of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rochester. She will begin her position January 8, 2022. The appointment was announced by the Most Reverend Salvatore R. Matano, Bishop of Rochester, and the Catholic Charities Board of Trustees.

Ms. Dehais brings a wide range of experience in the nonprofit, public and philanthropic sectors with extensive past involvement in Catholic Charities organizations. She was selected after a comprehensive process conducted by the search committee of the Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rochester.

Ms. Dehais will succeed Mr. Jack Balinsky, who is retiring as diocesan director and president after leading Diocese of Rochester Catholic Charities for nearly 30 years.

“I am honored and grateful for the opportunity to lead the team of dedicated professionals at Catholic Charities who deliver vital services that make a positive impact for people in need,” said Ms. Dehais. “I look forward to building on the rich tradition of service and advocacy for which Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rochester is known.”

Ms. Dehais, a native of Western New York, will direct a diocesan Catholic Charities family of agencies that serve more than 250,000 people annually in the 12-county Diocese of Rochester in such areas as home-purchase assistance; senior services; emergency services for food, clothing, and housing; help for the homeless; assistance to developmentally disabled people; help for people with mental illness; migrant-family assistance; and help with addiction, among others. Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rochester provides compassionate assistance to people in need without regard to religious, racial, ethnic, or economic background.

“Ms. Dehais brings to this crucial role a great deal of experience that will serve her well in continuing the vital mission of Catholic Charities to serve our communities with the compassion of Jesus Christ and

recognizing the dignity of every human person, especially the most vulnerable among us,” said Bishop Matano. “I look forward to working with Ms. Dehais, while also offering my deep gratitude to Mr. Balinsky for his many years of service and leadership.”

Most recently, Ms. Dehais has served as Evaluation and Learning Officer for the Health Forward Foundation in the Kansas City, Missouri, area, where she guided assessment of community needs to inform organizational strategy and investment of a \$20 million annual grantmaking budget. Previously, she founded and served for more than 12 years as principal consultant of Strategic Solutions Consulting, where she strengthened non-profit agencies to achieve greater positive change for individuals and communities. Before that, she served as Regional Director for Outreach, Dutchess County, for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York and also held the position of Associate Executive Director of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany.

Ms. Dehais also served in previous years as Executive Director of the Maternity and Early Childhood Foundation in Albany; Special Program Assistant to the Commissioner of the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services; and as a Policy Analyst for the Office of the New York State Lieutenant Governor, among other positions in her distinguished career.

Ms. Dehais holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University of Notre Dame, a Master of Arts degree in Public Policy from Duke University, and a Master of Science degree in Epidemiology from the State University of New York at Albany, School of Public Health.

For more information about Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rochester, visit <https://www.dor.org/about/office-ministry-directory/catholic-charities/>.

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