



Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc.

The Sage

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CYO Hosts Golf Tournament and Basketball Playoffs

Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) recently hosted a golf tournament at the Manhattan Beach Marriott Golf Course with 139 youth golfers. St. James School in Redondo Beach won the tournament, with St. Paul the Apostle School in Westwood taking second place and American Martyrs School in Manhattan Beach coming in third.



St. Charles Borromeo and St. Jane Frances de Chantal Schools, North Hollywood neighbors, battled for both the CYO boys' and girls' basketball championships with St. Jane Frances taking both titles.

The Gersten Pavilion at Loyola Marymount served as the backdrop for the 2011 CYO boys' and girls' basketball playoffs. Of the 135 schools in the girls' league and the 152 schools in the boys' league, St. Jane de Chantal School took home the championship title for both leagues.

CYO's new Program Director is James McGoldrick, a sports marketing veteran. His experience playing in CYO as a youth will enhance his understanding of the purpose and mission of the program. ❖

Cecilia Ordonez was a "moonbeam" at Catholic Charities

It did not surprise employees of the San Pedro Region of Catholic Charities when they learned, at her memorial, that Cecilia Ordonez had been a nun for eight years because they knew of her devotion to the Catholic Church. After she left the convent, Cecilia married and raised two step children. She was very involved in her children's schooling and became a great organizer of school fund raising activities while baking delicious snacks for the children. As her children grew up, her participation in the Church's Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) and the St. Vincent De Paul Society kept her very active in the Church. In 2005 she also joined the Catholic Charities' San Pedro Region's advisory board.



Cecilia Ordonez, July 31, 1947 – March 3, 2011, shown as she helps at a dinner at Elizabeth Ann Seton Residence.

Two years later, Cecilia became an employee of Catholic Charities, having lost her husband, her home and her business. Cecilia first worked with Catholic Charities' senior services, recruiting volunteers to bring food and friendly visits to isolated home-bound seniors. Later, Cecilia was asked to take on rental assistance programs for homeless families. She helped clients who needed something extra, such as food,

furniture to move into a new apartment, or transportation to work. In addition, Cecilia became the District President for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and was able to coordinate services for her Catholic Charities' clients.

Cecilia had to take a medical leave from Catholic Charities due to a recurrence of cancer. When she was no longer eligible for skilled nursing services, she was sent home without any further help, even though she could not walk. It was then that Cecilia experienced help from those with whom she had worked. The RCIA folks brought her meals, Catholic Charities volunteers and staff visited her bringing food and other items, and St. Raymond Catholic Church members and her co-volunteers at St. Vincent De Paul were there to assist as well.

Meanwhile, Cecilia's phone calls from her clients did not stop. From her wheelchair and bed, she fielded calls from former clients who needed help. She worked with Catholic Charities' staff, continuing to advocate for her clients, even as she was totally home bound herself.

"How do you hold a moonbeam in your hand?" is a line from a song in *The Sound of Music*. Cecilia was that moonbeam at Catholic Charities," said Anna Totta, Regional Director. "You would find her here on weekdays and Saturdays, looking for something good to make our clients' lives better. She was a devoted Catholic who understood that her entire life was surrounded by God's presence. We will miss her." ❖

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Message from the Executive Director, Rev. Monsignor Gregory A. Cox

In Mary Poplin's book entitled *What Mother Teresa Taught Me About Meaningful Work and Service*, she reflects upon her experience working with Mother Teresa at a children's facility. She writes, "One day I asked Sister Bethany, one of the lovely sisters in charge of the volunteers, how she explained the absence of chaos at these centers. She smiled and answered, 'Where there is poverty and oppression, there the grace of God more abounds.'" The author goes on to share with her readers that she could almost feel the lightness and fluidity of God's grace on the children and sisters. With all their prayer and humility, the work of Mother Teresa and the sisters went unfettered by despair; the shelter ran smoothly and joyfully.

The poor, the sick and the handicapped offer us the opportunities to demonstrate the love and power of God. Mother Teresa and her community exploited fully the abundant grace of God. They believed in it, thanked God for it, received it and put it to use. They hung a sign over the facility which described their work with orphaned children. The sign read, "Doing Something Beautiful for God."

The Board, staff, volunteers and benefactors of Catholic Charities are doing "doing something beautiful for God" when they serve the runaway child, visit the elderly, shelter the homeless and provide jobs for the unemployed. Mother Teresa reminds us that when we serve the poor and downtrodden it is not only a grace-filled moment for those being served but also for those doing the service. ❀

Youth Program Coordinator Receives Scott® First BIEN HECHO Award

Fernando Sarabia, a Youth Program Coordinator at Catholic Charities' El Santo Niño Community Center, received the first annual Scott® Bien Hecho Award for his dedication and commitment to the Hispanic youth of the local community.



Fernando Sarabia and Veona Gibson are shown receiving the check awarded to El Santo Niño Community Center.

The "Bien Hecho", or "Well Done," award sponsored by Scott® Brand gives national recognition to the unsung heroes, whose dedication and service to the Hispanic Community are above and beyond the call of duty. Fernando Sarabia, along with two other Los Angeles recipients, a total of eight awardees nationwide, was honored at a press conference held at the Los Angeles City Hall. Along with the recognition, he received a check for \$2,000 and a \$5,000 donation to his designated non-profit agency, Catholic Charities' El Santo Niño Community Center in Our Lady of the Angels Region.

Mr. Sarabia is a product of the neighborhood that he serves and is personally responsible for preventing many Hispanic youth from joining gangs. Since 2006, his commitment to the objective of the program, to maximize the academic achievement of the students through the use of positive reinforcement tools, continues to grow strong. Under his leadership and guidance, El Santo Niño Community Center has a successful after-school program that tutors and mentors at-risk middle and senior high school students. He administers an after-school program that provides homework assistance, recreational and sports activities, educational field trips and an on-site summer day camp.

In spite of personal barriers, he graduated from California State University, Long Beach with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. He has become a strong and selfless model for the youth not only of Catholic Charities' El Santo Niño Community Center, but also of the local Hispanic community. ❀

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Re-Dedication Marks Guadalupe Community Center's 60 Years of Service.

The historic Catholic Charities' Guadalupe Community Center in Canoga Park was recently blessed and re-dedicated by the Most Reverend Gerald Wilkerson, Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles, San Fernando Pastoral Region. The ceremony also marked the unveiling and blessing of a new statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe, whose image remains a symbol of comfort and protection to the poor and needy who are served by the community center.

Over one hundred guests came to participate in the re-dedication ceremony. Among them were Congressman Brad Sherman of the 27th District of California, Monsignor Gregory Cox, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Moeed Khan, Catholic Charities' San Fernando Regional Director, clients and volunteers.



The new statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe was unveiled and blessed at the Guadalupe Center re-dedication.

The new statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe was generously donated by an active volunteer and local resident, Jack O'Connell. The Patroness of Mexico and the Americas, Our Lady of Guadalupe's symbolic presence gives hope to the impoverished Latinos who represent 79% of clients served at this center.

"Our Lady has been watching over the center for 60 years and I am certain she will continue to watch over it for many years to come," Moeed Khan, Regional Director, commented to a guest.

The 60-year old community center was founded by Mary Logan Orcutt to help the Mexican-immigrant workers of the Orcutt ranch. Soon after, Mrs. Orcutt donated the center to the Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Mrs. Orcutt's vision was to create a youth recreational facility and family services. That vision is carried on in the youth programs and social services provided daily at Catholic Charities' Guadalupe Community center.

Last year, the center served 22,000 poor and low income people from the West San Fernando Valley with programs that include a food pantry, English language classes, a children's learning center and an employment service. ❖

Catholic Charities
Golf Tournament

FIFTEENTH ANNUAL
CATHOLIC CHARITIES
GOLF TOURNAMENT

MONDAY, JUNE 20, 2011
OAKMONT COUNTRY CLUB,
GLENDALE

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CALL (213)251-3494 OR VISIT
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HOUSE AND ASSIST OUR CLIENTS
WHO ARE POOR AND HOMELESS.

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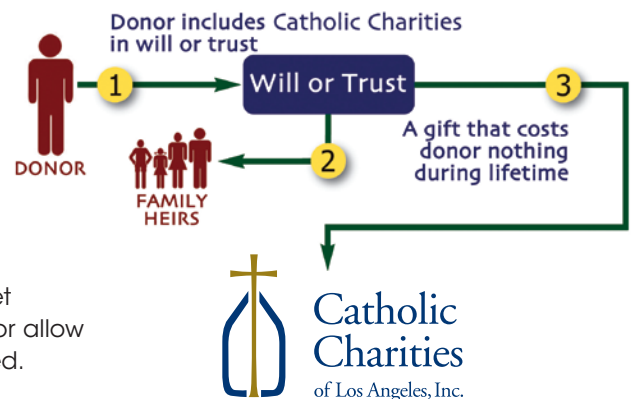
It's Revocable: A bequest doesn't take effect until your death. It's a gift that doesn't affect your current asset balance or cash flow. If your plans or circumstances change, you can easily revise the bequest.

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We can help you take the next steps to plan a bequest.

Just contact Alexandria (Sandi) Arnold at sarnold@CatholicCharitiesLA.org or at (213) 251-3495.



Walk-a-Thon Raises Funds and Awareness

The San Gabriel Region of Catholic Charities held an event in March designed to fulfill the agency's mission statement while fostering family and community life. Entitled "Footprints: Making Tracks for Neighbors in Need," this first-annual fundraiser allowed participants to provide for "neighbors in need" in the San Gabriel Valley.

The event was a walk-a-thon and attendees gathered pledges for each lap completed around the track at Bishop Amat High School in La Puente. The pledges could be in the form of prayers or funds, to benefit those living in poverty in their communities. The participants, who had sacrificed their Saturday morning for this cause, tread around a track and viewed posters with stories, photos, and statistics about those living in poverty in the San Gabriel Valley.

The awareness-building and engagement of diverse communities were meant to be "steps" for creating a more socially just community. Being selfless does not have to be somber, though, and the activities confirmed that helping others can be fun. A Tiny Tots 50 meter dash, Zumba dance lessons, free refreshments, face-painting, raffles, and even an impromptu soccer game made the event a hit with all present. ❖



Monsignor Jim Loughnane, Pastor of St. Denis Catholic Church in Diamond Bar, opened the ceremonies with an invocation, inviting participants to walk with Christ to serve the poor and asking God for blessings on those in need around the world.



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Address Service Requested



Guadalupe Community Center's food pantry, run by staff and volunteers, allows local residents to obtain fresh, healthy groceries.

