



# CHARITY IN *Action*

December 2023



Catholic Social Services hosted the 68th Annual Archbishop's Benefit for Children Christmas Party for nearly 500 children and youth at the Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown Hotel in December.

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## OUR WORK

The Secretariat for Catholic Human Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia (CHS) is the largest faith-based human services provider in Southeastern Pennsylvania and benefits more than 300,000 individuals of all faiths annually.

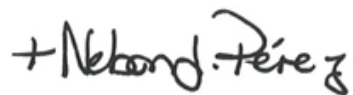
CHS is comprised of various agencies that administer a broad range of human services programs throughout the five-county Philadelphia area as an expression of the charitable works of our local Church and daily touch the lives of immigrants, those experiencing homelessness, women in crisis, at-risk youth, senior citizens, the intellectually disabled, those facing hunger, and more.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Through its many good works, The Secretariat for Catholic Human Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia builds on the legacy of Jesus Christ by lifting up the poor, proclaiming liberty to captives, restoring sight to the blind, and freeing the oppressed.

As you read about the transformative impact we have in our local communities, please know we count on your continued prayers for God's blessings on our unceasing efforts to make the love of Christ evident through the charitable works of our Church.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Revered Nelson J. Pérez, D.D.  
Archbishop of Philadelphia



Dear Friends,

As a lifelong Catholic and resident of the Philadelphia area, I am passionate about our local Church's works of mercy and charity.

From the city to the suburbs, Catholic Human Services remains a shining beacon of hope for our most vulnerable brothers and sisters. I am honored to work beside the thousands of compassionate and committed women and men who do the extraordinary work of this organization each day. They are the hands of Christ and their labor is a reflection of God's love for all people.

I hope reading about the tremendously positive impact we are making in our local communities throughout the region inspires you. Please pray for us and the success of our mission. May God bless you.

Sincerely,



Heather Huot, MSW, LSW  
Secretary for Catholic Human Services  
Archdiocese of Philadelphia



To read a news story, please click the title.

# IN THE News



## **MLK Day 2024: 5 Ways to Celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. in the Archdiocese**

By CatholicPhilly

On Jan. 15, communities across the Philadelphia region will join with others around the country to celebrate the life and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Here are five ways to honor Dr. King's legacy.



## **Catholic Human Services Starts Year with New Leader**

By CatholicPhilly

Heather Huot, 45, a Northeast Philadelphia native, is the first woman to lead the largest faith-based social services provider in Southeast Pennsylvania.



## **Cardinal O'Hara Students Give Local Children Gifts and Prayers This Christmas**

By CatholicPhilly

For over a decade, Cardinal O'Hara has hosted Operation Santa Claus and fulfilled the wishes of thousands of young people in need throughout the Philadelphia area.



## **Operation Bundle Up: Ten Years of Providing Warmth During the Winter**

By CatholicPhilly

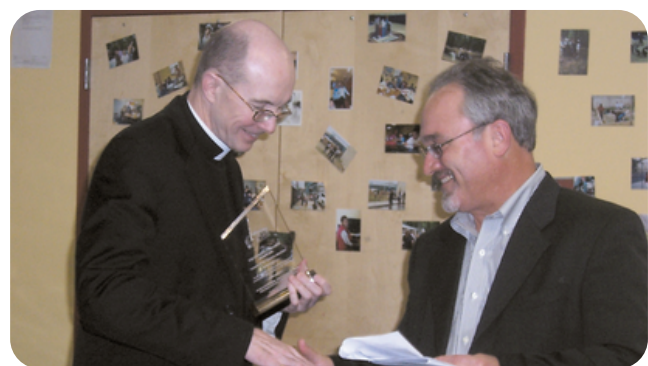
The event distributed some 1,000 winter coats and accessories along with resources to local families and children.

# THANK YOU, *Jim!*

Mr. James Amato, MSW, former Secretary for Catholic Human Services, retired on December 31, 2023 following a career of service to those in need throughout the Philadelphia region.

For the past 40 years, Jim served the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's Secretariat for Catholic Human Services in several roles.


Prayerful best wishes to Jim on his retirement!



## Catholic Social Services Hosts 68th Annual Archbishop's Benefit for Children Christmas Party for Nearly 500 Children and Youth

In mid December, Catholic Social Services hosted their 68th annual Archbishop's Benefit for Children Christmas Party! This year's theme was "The Archbishop's Christmas Sneaker Ball."

Attendees represented thousands of young people across the Greater Philadelphia Area who benefit annually from community-based and residential programs offered by Catholic Social Services. Nearly 500 children and youth enjoyed an afternoon filled with performances, sing-a-longs, snacks, and a surprise visit from Santa!

To view more photos, please click the arrow 



## Saint Edmond's Home for Children to Open Second Community Home in Spring 2024

In 2020, Saint Edmond's Home for Children opened their first community home, Saint Philomena Cottage. The home provides care and independence to young adult women with disabilities who formerly resided at Saint Edmond's Home for Children and aged out of the care model provided there. Due to the success of Saint Philomena Cottage, a second home will open this spring. Four young women will move into the home from Saint Edmond's with staff whom they have developed a rich and loving relationship with over many years. The four residents will be able to transition to adulthood with their friends while supported by Saint Edmond's staff.



## Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish Community Collects Snack Bags for NDS



Youth and young adult members of Saint Thomas Aquinas parish came together to organize dozens of snack bags and toiletry bags for NDS! The agency will distribute the donated bags to people experiencing homelessness.

## Star Harbor Senior Community Center Holiday Drive



Thanks to the efforts of the community center advisory board and the support of the members, Star Harbor Senior Community Center was able to supply hats, scarfs, gloves, and socks to a kindergarten class at William C. Longstreth Elementary School in Southwest Philadelphia.



## Senior Center Members Attend Play at Kimmel Cultural Campus

Members of Saint Edmond and Star Harbor Senior Community Centers recently spent the day in Philadelphia attending AIN'T TOO PROUD – *The Life and Times of The Temptations* at the Kimmel Cultural Campus!

## Pajama Giveaway

For the holiday season, Nativity B.V.M. Senior Community Center in Port Richmond hosted a pajama collection for St. Christopher's Hospital for Children! Over 60 pairs of pajamas were collected by center members for children staying in the pediatric hospital.



## Norris Square Senior Center Performs Parranda Puertorriquena for Local Community Members



This holiday season, members of Norris Square Senior Community Center participated in Parranda Puertorriquena, a type of Christmas caroling that is a custom in Puerto Rico. Members sang songs for residents of Casa Carmen Aponte, a Catholic Housing and Community Services senior housing facility, before being joined by Philadelphia Police officers for a performance at the center's holiday party.

"This event really brought the joy of Christmas to the tenants," noted Wanda Mercado, center manager.

# The Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence Celebrate Annual Family Christmas Party



Men and women from The Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence (DGDP), part of the Intellectual Disabilities Division of Catholic Social Services, marked the Christmas season with DGDP's traditional family party.

Nearly 500 individuals were in attendance for this festive occasion, including those served by DGDP as well as their families and caregivers. Supporters and benefactors of the program were also invited to participate.



The event included caroling by the West Chester University Newman Center Choir, dancing, a seated luncheon, a distribution of gifts, and a special visit from Santa. DGDP's Christmas party was made possible through the generosity of donors and volunteers, both at the corporate and individual levels.



## Saint Edmond Senior Community Center Members Celebrate the New Year



## Star Harbor Drama Club Presents Christmas Play to Senior Community Residents





## Saint John's Hospice's Choral Group Performs at Homeless Persons' Memorial Day Event in Center City

The Good Shepherd Singers, a choral group composed of staff, residents, and alumni of Saint John's Hospice (SJH), performed holiday and gospel songs at the annual Homeless Persons' Memorial Day observance in Center City, Philadelphia. Held on the darkest day of the year, the outdoor event commemorated the hundreds of Philadelphians experiencing homelessness who died this year.

Forming in 2018, The Good Shepherd Singers provide residents of SJH and The Good Shepherd Program an opportunity to build community and fellowship through music. The group performs at a variety of functions each year including events for Catholic Social Services, the monthly Bishop's Dinner at SJH, and the Archbishop's Benefit for Children Christmas Party.

The Good Shepherd Program, run by SJH, is a 12-bed residence for individuals who have HIV/AIDS.

For six decades, SJH has provided a continuum of care and crucial, life-sustaining services with dignity, respect, and compassion to individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Philadelphia. Services include residential programs and emergency shelter, food, case management, on-site medical and mental health care, daily showers, clothing, a mail room for over 1,700 men, as well as additional services specific to individual needs.



## NDS Staff Prepares Holiday Bags for Partner Agencies



Nutritional Development Services put together hundreds of gift bags filled with snacks and treats to help some of their partner agencies celebrate Christmas with the people that they serve!



# PROVIDING HELP, *Creating Hope!*

Archdiocese of Philadelphia • 222 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103

 **Catholic Housing and Community Services**  
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA



 **NUTRITIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**  
Archdiocese of Philadelphia



 **Catholic Social Services**  
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA  
*Catholic Social Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia continues the work of Jesus by affirming, assisting, and advocating for individuals, families and communities.*

  
PROVIDING HELP • CREATING HOPE

