



# CHARITY IN *Action*

February 2024



Nutritional Development Services staff members joined Archbishop Nelson Pérez and Archdiocese of Philadelphia Schools to celebrate Catholic Schools Week! Over 300 students from Archdiocesan high schools, elementary schools, and schools of special education packaged 2,500 care bags to benefit NDS' Community Food Program.

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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.

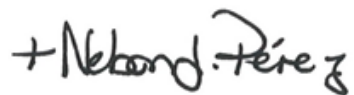
CHS is comprised of various agencies that administer a broad range of human services programs throughout the five-county Philadelphia area as an expression of the charitable works of our local Church and daily touch the lives of immigrants, those experiencing homelessness, women in crisis, at-risk youth,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



## **Over 300 Students Package 2,500 Care Bags For Catholic Schools Week**

By CatholicPhilly

See scenes from the Feb. 1 keystone event for the celebration of Catholic Schools Week in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.



## **Archdiocese Launches 49th Annual CRS Rice Bowl**

By CatholicPhilly

Rice Bowl is a nationwide Lenten program providing people of all ages with a way to put their faith into action through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.



## **NDS Launches Lenten Food Drive – Here's How You Can Help**

By CatholicPhilly

This year's food drive offers both in-person and online donation options available now through March 26.



## **Star Harbor Senior Center to Celebrate Black History Month in Dramatic Style**

By CatholicPhilly

Set to honor unsung heroes, it will come courtesy of the site's 10-member-strong drama club.

## New Director Named for Catholic Housing and Community Services

By **CatholicPhilly**

Suzanne O'Grady Laurito, MSS, has been named as the next Director of Catholic Housing and Community Services (CHCS) of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, according to a Feb. 28 announcement from the archdiocese. Her appointment became effective Feb. 26

She succeeds Heather Huot, MSW, LSW, who had served as Director of CHCS since 2020 until her appointment as Secretary for Catholic Human Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia by Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez in Dec. 2023.

“Catholic Housing and Community Services empowers and supports older adults across the Archdiocese, serving thousands of our sisters and brothers as they age with dignity,” Huot said. “Mrs. Laurito brings the steadfast leadership and creative vision to further this vital mission of Catholic Human Services.

CHCS is recognized as a leading provider of senior living services throughout the Philadelphia region. Programs include senior housing, senior centers, parish-based eldercare programs, elder care helpline, and senior clubs.

“The charitable works of mercy undertaken by our Church resonate deeply with me. I have been fortunate to serve women and children contending with homeless and families involved in the child welfare system,” said O'Grady Laurito.

“I am grateful for this opportunity to lead the dedicated and skilled staff of Catholic Housing and Community Services, as we support older adults aging with dignity and grace,” she added.

O'Grady Laurito has dedicated more than 25 years of service to works of charity and mercy undertaken by the Archdiocese. She previously served in posts with Catholic Social Services including Program Director for Mercy Hospice and McAuley House (1997-2000) and Administrator for foster care and child welfare cases (2000-2003). She also held several positions of increasing responsibility within Catholic Housing and Community Services including Senior Project Manager for the Office for Community Development (2004-2014) and Assistant Director for CHCS (2014-2017, 2020-2024).

She also managed the archdiocesan Catholic Campaign for Human Development, an initiative through the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and served as the Grants and Events Manager for Face to Face (2018-2020).

For more than two decades, O'Grady Laurito has played an instrumental role in the expansion of the archdiocesan portfolio of affordable housing for seniors seeking to age in place within their communities. She has also been critical to efforts to provide a continuum of senior care services in senior centers and parishes located throughout the five-county metropolitan region.

O'Grady Laurito holds a Master of Social Services Degree in Advocacy, Planning, and Program Development from Bryn Mawr College and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Philosophy and Speech Communications from Boston College.



# PARTNERS IN *Mission*



Each week during Lent, Deacon Franz Fruehwald, Chief Financial Officer for Catholic Human Services, will offer faithful weekly reflections on CatholicPhilly. Deacon Franz is a permanent deacon at Queen of Peace Parish in Ardsley



## Local Father-Son Duo Feed the Hungry, Serving Thousands of Meals in Archdiocese

By CatholicPhilly

On a daily basis father and son duo Bill and Matt Peck live out Jesus' call to "feed the hungry" that is found in Matthew 25. In 2023, they prepared over 7,000 meals for local people facing food insecurity in the Philadelphia region.

Both are longtime parishioners at Saint John Chrysostom in Wallingford. Four days a week, 95-year-old Bill is in the parish kitchen at 4:00 a.m. He is soon joined there by his son Matt, 63.



# Archdiocese of Philadelphia Kicks Off 49th Annual Rice Bowl Initiative

At the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center the Archdiocese of Philadelphia kicked off the 49th annual Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) Rice Bowl initiative. Rice Bowl is a nationwide Lenten program providing people of all ages with a way to put their faith into action through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

In 2023, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's collection was up nearly 14% with over \$426,000 raised through Rice Bowl. Approximately seventy-five percent of those funds, or \$320,000, supported CRS' humanitarian response and development programs in nearly 100 countries where it operates. The remaining twenty-five percent of the funds, or \$106,000, went to Nutritional Development Services supporting hunger and poverty alleviation efforts through its network of 50 food cupboards throughout the Greater Philadelphia region.

This year, Rice Bowl officially began on Ash Wednesday, February 14, and will conclude on Holy Saturday, March 30. For additional information and resources for CRS Rice Bowl, please visit [here](#).



## Learn more about Rice Bowl

VIEW

## Star Harbor Senior Sewing Club Designs Quilt for Center



The Star Harbor Sewing Class recently finished their collective quilt! It is a replica of the quilts that were used during slavery to help the slaves communicate with one another on how to get to freedom. Each symbol on the quilt is coded. The quilt will be on display at Star Harbor Senior Community Center.

## Saint John Neumann Parish hosts bake sale to benefit numerous ministries including The Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence and Visitation Homes!



## Nutritional Development Services Hosts Annual "One-Can Meal" Lenten Food Drive



Nutritional Development Services (NDS), an agency of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, is hosting its annual "One-Can Meal" food drive to enable broad and meaningful participation in the Lenten season.

This year's Lenten food drive runs Wednesday, February 14 – Tuesday, March 26, 2024.

Those interested in supporting NDS' Community Food Program and our neighbors in need can purchase canned goods, snacks, and more online through [You Give Goods](#). Those interested in donating items directly are asked to please contact Ms. Denise Hopkins, at [dhopkins@ndsarch.org](mailto:dhopkins@ndsarch.org).

## Fatima Catholic Outreach Center Program Remains Strong and Growing 10 Years Later



In 2014, Saint Charles Borromeo and Our Lady of Fatima Parishes in Bucks County merged at the Saint Charles Borromeo location.

Following, Our Lady of Fatima Church became the Fatima Catholic Outreach Center, a social services ministry with a focus on serving the Hispanic communities of Lower Bucks County and Northeast Philadelphia. The center was initially a collaborative project of Catholic Social Services (CSS) and Saint Mary Medical Center.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, services at the center were suspended in April 2020. In September 2020 the doors reopened, this time under a new partnership between CSS and Saint Charles Borromeo Parish.

Modes of support at the site include social work, community immigration resources, accompaniment, domestic violence advocacy, seasonal English as a second language (ESL) classes, and interpretation services. Additional programs include gardening and arts programs, financial education, immigration legal services, citizenship classes, and meals for those experiencing homelessness.

“We at the Fatima Center are grateful for the opportunity Father Philip Forlano (Pastor of Saint Charles Borromeo Parish) has given us to assist the entire community with programs and services for everyone in the area,” said Estela Reyes-Bugg, Administrator of CSS’ Volunteer and Parish Community Relations. “It has been a great partnership that we hope and pray will continue as we work together to serve God’s people.”

Due to serving a large Latino population in the area, CSS identified the need for ESL classes at the site in 2014. Ten years later, the program is as strong as ever and growing.

“In March of 2023 we increased the number of students and added two more classes due to the increasing arrivals and individuals in need of learning English,” Reyes-Bugg noted.

Classes range from 12 to 18 weeks and are offered twice a week 7:00 p.m.- 9:00 p.m.

Continue reading 



**SAINT** **John's**  
**HOSPICE** **60** anniversary  
**GALA**

Thursday, April 18, 2024  
5:30pm

American Swedish Historical Museum

\$150 per Individual | \$275 per couple | \$1,200 per reserved table

Join the Saint John's Hospice community of supporters for an evening to remember in celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of service to our most vulnerable neighbors. There will be cocktails and dinner served, a lively auction led by Ringman and Auctioneer, Scott Jones of Raising Paddles, and a host of honorees who have contributed to the success of SJH throughout the years. Please join us, for what is sure to be, a wonderful evening.

*Sponsorship opportunities include:*

Title Sponsor, \$20,000

Presenting Sponsor, \$15,000

New Beginnings Sponsor, \$10,000

Compassion in Action Sponsor, \$5,000

Help and Hope Sponsor, \$2,500



For sponsorship questions, please contact Kris Jaeger, Director, Development & Community Relations at [kjaeger@chs-adphila.org](mailto:kjaeger@chs-adphila.org) or 973-342-4188.



# 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

