

*Providing Help ★ Creating Hope*

# CSS connections

Christmas Edition

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Vol. 18 issue 3 - Winter 2015

## St. Vincent's Home Maternity and Mother-Baby Residence

Supporting Pregnant Teens Who Choose Life, and Teen Moms with Young Children

Catholic Social Services has provided mother-baby and maternity care for women in crisis, dating back a century to Saint Vincent Services for Women and Children, once a large hospital in West Philadelphia. In the 1990's, a dramatic increase in DHS referrals of pregnant girls and teen mothers led to the opening of CSS maternity and mother-baby community group homes. DHS placements are due to abuse or neglect, domestic turmoil, or unsafe home situations, often worsened by lack of parental support for an unplanned pregnancy. In response,

St. Vincent's provides girls a welcoming, supportive, and nurturing place to live during pregnancy and/or after giving birth. Each girl is immediately connected to prenatal medical care, and a nurse on staff provides instruction on proper self-care during pregnancy and how to be a good parent. Meanwhile, social workers and therapists work toward possible family reunification, or alternative placement like foster care for mother and baby. A school on the campus of St. Francis & St. Vincent Homes helps girls stay on track academically while in care.

*(Continued on page 3...)*



SUPPORT THE PRO-LIFE WORK OF ST. VINCENT'S HOME WITH YOUR YEAR-END DONATION!



A message from Joseph J. Sweeney, Jr.

## Secretary for Catholic Human Services

It is with both gratitude and sadness that I write my last message to you, our faithful CSS friends and benefactors. After prayerful reflection, I have decided to retire as Secretary for Catholic Human Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, effective December 31, 2015. It has been my honor and privilege to serve in this role for the past seven and a half years. For me, this appointment has been the capstone of over three decades which I have dedicated to the charitable work of the Church. As a lifelong Catholic who strives each day to put my faith into action, I am proud to be associated with programs and people that make God's love **real** in our world, every day.

This past year has been incredible, headlined by the World Meeting of Families and Papal Visit. These events deeply impacted me, my family, and many colleagues and friends with whom I shared the experience. I was touched by the tenderness of Pope Francis as he greeted men, women and children with intellectual disabilities whom we serve in the *Communities of Don Guanella, Divine Providence Village, and St. Edmond's Home for Children*. The message of the Holy Father at the Festival of Families on the gift of family life filled me with gratitude as I listened with my wife Agnes, our five children, their spouses, eight grandchildren, plus twins on the way! As Pope Francis said, the family is where we find "love, truth, beauty and goodness." That night his words spoke to me as a husband, father, and grandfather, confirming it was time for me to spend more time with the family God has blessed me to be part of.

I'm gratified with what we have accomplished in Catholic Social Services and the Secretariat to which it belongs. Amidst a rapidly changing funding landscape,

we've put our programs on a more stable and sustainable financial footing. We've made important decisions that reaffirm commitment to our mission to serve the poor, always maintaining fidelity to our Catholic identity. In 2015, we celebrated the dedication of *Cardinal Krol Homes* mini-campus, where 30 men with intellectual disabilities now live in three new group homes adjacent to the former Don Guanella Village. This year also saw the completion of our move to community homes for nearly 80 additional men, previously housed at the CK Center. We rededicated the CSS Montgomery County food pantry, now renovated and transformed into a *Martha's Choice Marketplace* that provides food assistance with dignity. In both ceremonies we sought God's blessing upon these places and good works, with Bishop John J. McIntyre leading us in prayer. As the first layperson to hold this position, I cannot say enough about the support and guidance Bishop McIntyre has regularly provided me. I am also grateful to Archbishop Chaput for his unwavering leadership in supporting us in our mission every day.

Working for the church has been one of the best decisions of my life, and leading Catholic Human Services was truly the job of a lifetime. It enabled me to put into action the values, example and guidance given me by the Christian Brothers at La Salle University. I leave knowing that the job is never done; there will always be more good work to do, more people in need to serve. Personally, I got so much more out of this job than I gave. I met wonderful, dedicated, kind, and faith-filled people. At this time of Christmas, I can honestly say it has all been a true gift. Thank you to all who have shared this journey with me. May all of you and your families be blessed with the peace and joy of our Savior at Christmas and in the New Year!



Rosa with her son Antonio enjoying some play time together at Saint Vincent's Mother-Baby and Maternity Residence. The group home can accommodate a dozen young women, along with their infant or toddler age children. A dozen full-time staff provide compassionate care 24/7.

*(Continued from cover...)*

While many services for the girls are covered by public funding, CSS proudly subsidizes a substantial amount of care for their children. For the past 7 years, CSS has received \$18 a day for care of a newborn infant or growing toddler, and as Jim Amato, Deputy Secretary for Catholic Social Services notes, "It's hard enough to get a babysitter for 2 hours for \$18, and we provide 24/7 quality care which obviously costs more than that. Our mission is to protect life and care for children, including these girls who are choosing life. Saint Vincent's Home puts our Church's pro-life commitment into action in concrete ways every day."

Jim Logan, Administrator of St. Francis & St. Vincent Homes observes: "Caring for each person across the full spectrum of life is why we're in this work. This house is a place where there's a lot of love and caring. If they were not with us, these girls would be in very difficult circumstances, so we provide what they need through a difficult time in their life so that they and their children can go on and do good things." Staff member Wanda Crumbley offers: "We don't judge them, we are just here for them in any way that their family can't be, to show them lots of love and give them the guidance they need."

**Sabrina** (17) and her 1-year-old son Akeem have been at St. Vincent's for 9 months. She has learned to "be more independent and do things on my own with my child." She is grateful for the help she receives and hopes "to raise my son right to have a good childhood."

**Mayrelis** (16) has been at St. Vincent's since shortly before she delivered her daughter Isabella, now 4 months old. She appreciates how St. Vincent's staff have been "really nice, very helpful, and taught me about self-respect."

**Rosa** (15) and her 15-month-old son Antonio have been at St. Vincent's for 2 months, and she is thankful for help in "creating a bond with my son, knowing how to spend time together and be a good mother." She hopes he will learn from her and not repeat her mistakes.

**Nataya** (16) and her 6-month-old son Zakeed have been at St. Vincent's for 2 months, and she appreciates how the staff are emotionally supportive: "They provide us with all we need, and if it is just someone to talk, they are there for us. They help us be good moms."

**Lakenya** (17) is 8 months pregnant, and has been at St. Vincent's for 7 months. She appreciates how she "does not need to worry about safety, shelter, or food, and the classes teaching us how to be moms and respectable young women. It's all been a blessing."



## Cardinal Krol Homes: A Community of Don Guanella

New Campus Opens for Former Residents of Don Guanella Village

A blessing and dedication ceremony was held on Friday, October 23, 2015 at the new “mini-campus” for men who were formerly residents of the nearby Don Guanella Village. Called Cardinal Krol Homes - A Community of Don Guanella, the mini-campus features three homes that each serve 10 men with intellectual disabilities who also have more involved health care needs. The new construction sits on a tract of land adjacent to the former DGV campus and nearby Cardinal O’Hara High School. The spirit, care and loving concern that have been the hallmarks of Don Guanella Village lives on in these three homes and another dozen newly established community group homes throughout the region, that together comprise **The Communities of Don Guanella**.

Most Reverend John J. McIntyre, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, presided at the ceremony, accompanied by local public figures and major donors who have supported the project. The residents of the new homes along with many of their family

members were present, along with staff from the various programs that comprise the Developmental Programs Division of Catholic Social Services, which supports men, women and children with intellectual disabilities.

Father Dennis Weber, SdC has been associated with work of Don Guanella Village for over 25 years. As a member of the Servants of Charity who have been engaged in this ministry since 1960, Weber expressed “our profound gratitude for the blessing of those men we have served, accompanied, and prayed with over the past 55 years, who touched our lives in countless and unforgettable ways.” As the Communities of Don Guanella embark on the next chapter of their history with this new campus, Father Weber acknowledges that “we depend on our loving and provident Father in heaven, and our patron, St. Louis Guanella who inspires us to continue his good work. Ever **inspired by Divine Providence**, we will continue to thankfully walk in the footsteps of Don Guanella.”



Group Home resident Doug Mecke in foreground, and resident Bobby Lowery in background with his sister Pat and brother-in-law Steve.



Bishop John J. McIntyre, Jack Abbott, Fr. Dennis Weber SdC, and Mike Magee.

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia transferred a parcel of land adjacent to the former Don Guanella Village campus for use as the site of the mini-campus, which realized a total construction cost of approximately \$4 million. Jim Gula, a longtime friend and ongoing benefactor of Don Guanella Village, earmarked proceeds from a projected \$500,000 land sale to be donated for the project, and one of the buildings bears his name to acknowledge his generous contribution. Jim and his wife Tina were invited to assist in naming the other two buildings, one of which recognizes the Sisters, Servants

of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) who have served and educated so many Catholic school children in the Archdiocese for so many years (the Gulas included). The other is named in honor of the Servants of Charity, the congregation of priests who have served the residents of Don Guanella Village for the past 55 years. Fr. Dennis Weber, SdC, continues that tradition of Guanellian ministry today.

Pictured l to r: Fr. Dennis Weber SdC, Kelsey Gula, Tina and Jim Gula, and Sr. Kathleen Schipani IHM



"My family & I have been volunteering, fundraising, coaching & mentoring at Don Guanella Village for over 20 years. Helping these men and women has been the greatest, most rewarding family experience of our lifetime. Words cannot express the overwhelming amount of joy my wife Tina and I felt at seeing this spectacular new mini-campus come to fruition for the very special DGV residents who now live here. We hope that our contribution will serve as a guiding light for future generations of supporters. We are honored, humbled & blessed to be able to give back in such a wonderful way, and feel in our hearts that this experience reflects the saying that *it is in giving that we truly receive.*" – Jim Gula



OST Programs Fall Festival part of nationwide

### Lights On Afterschool Rallies

On Saturday, October 24, 2015, the **CSS Out of School Time Programs** held a *Lights On Afterschool* event at the Holy Innocents OST Program in Northeast Philadelphia, to showcase the talent of some of the 2,000 at-risk youth in Philadelphia served by their programs. This was one of more than 8,000 such events held around the nation that week, organized by the *Afterschool Alliance* to provide support for afterschool programs that serve at-risk youth. The event highlighted the need to financially support opportunities for every child to attend an afterschool program. Afterschool programs have been proven to inspire children to learn, while keeping them safe in the sometimes perilous afternoon hours, and relieving working families of worries about their children’s activities outside of school time. Featured participants in the *Lights On Afterschool* event included members of the *Philadelphia 76ers Dance Team* came to teach some of their dance routines to a dance

troupe from the local OST Program. In addition, in a wonderful sign of support for CSS OST Programs, numerous food trucks were present to serve attendees their specialties, all of which donated between 10 and 15% of their event proceeds to support these vital programs.

Catholic Social Services first opened the doors of its afterschool programs in Philadelphia over twenty years ago. Its mission is to serve as a safe and academically inspiring environment for children at risk due to poverty or crime. CSS achieves success in this mission by providing opportunities for educational assistance, STEM program-based learning, 3D modeling, Project-Based Learning Design, stop-motion animation, and various recreational activities. CSS collaborates with the school system, multiple not-profit organizations, and local museums and colleges to operate its afterschool programming.



To support OST programs like this, donate to:



**60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

THE ARCHBISHOP'S CHRISTMAS  
BENEFIT for CHILDREN

*A gift that gives all year long*

For more information and to donate visit  
[www.ArchbishopsChristmasBenefit.org](http://www.ArchbishopsChristmasBenefit.org)





Renovated Montgomery County Food Pantry Rededicated as

## MARTHA'S CHOICE MARKETPLACE

On November 24, 2015, a blessing and rededication ceremony was held at the CSS Montgomery County Family Service Center, to inaugurate the transformation of its food pantry into a Martha's Choice Marketplace. Predicated on the values of promoting *choice*, preserving *dignity*, and building *relationships* with patrons, “**Martha's Choice Marketplace**” offers a new and visionary food distribution model which fosters a friendly, welcoming environment that promotes warm relationships between patrons, staff and volunteers.

Most Reverend John J. McIntyre, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, presided at the ceremony, accompanied by local public figures and major donors who have supported the project. Patrons of the food pantry and their family members were also pres-

ent, along with staff and volunteers of the food pantry, which is the largest food distribution program in Montgomery County. Last year over 10,000 men, women and children throughout the region were assisted, with over 500,000 pounds of food distributed.

Elizabeth Peteraf, CSS Program Administrator for Montgomery County, highlighted how “the marketplace replaces the perceived stigma of needing food assistance with an experience that maintains the dignity of our patrons, as we respectfully invite them to share from the storehouse of our abundance. This new way of relating to and accompanying those we serve allows for personalized attention that empowers, educates, and cultivates vital life skills in hopes of improving access and opening opportunity to a brighter tomorrow for those we serve.”



The Knights and Dames of Malta are dedicated weekly volunteers at Martha's Choice Marketplace. Pictured left to right are: George E. Gunning IV, KM; Robert Macri, KM with his wife Carol; Jeanne Raubenstine, DM with her husband Clair Raubenstine, KM; and Karen Hoy, DM.



The choice marketplace employs a centralized point of service that ensures greater equity in how donated food resources are shared with patrons, while providing them with greater choice and easier access to healthy and nutritious food options based on their needs, culture and preferences.

The generosity of donors and volunteers has made possible this transition from traditional food pantry into a **“Martha’s Choice Marketplace.”** Major benefactors include The Order of Malta-Federal Association (\$25,000) and North Penn Community Health Foundation (\$10,000). Other local community partners include CADCOM, Cabrini College, Eastern College, Gwynedd Mercy College, Philabundance, Shoprite, Ursinus College, Villanova University, Nutritional Development Services, and local Scout Troops #7155 and #369. Over 70 volunteers serve at the pantry on a weekly basis, most from a dozen local parishes involved in the effort for years: Epiphany of Our Lord, St. Eleanor, Corpus Christi, St. Genevieve, St. Helena, St. Maria Goretti, St. Paul, St. Stanislaus, St. Titus, Visitation BVM, Mother of Divine Providence, St. Teresa of Avila, and St. Francis of Assisi.

“Like the sisters Martha and Mary, after we have heard the words of Jesus which form, guide and challenge us, He sends us out to serve those most in need of our help, to make a gift of ourselves for others just as He made a gift of himself for our salvation.” - **Most Rev. John J. McIntyre**, Aux. Bishop

“We accepted the challenge to come here and help one Saturday a month to stock shelves, and quickly saw the benefit that those in need derive from coming here for help. We are proud that the Order of Malta was able to provide the money to buy refrigerators and freezers with glass doors to realize the vision of becoming a choice marketplace.”  
- **Clair Raubenstine**, Order of Malta, Federal Assoc.

“We are pleased to be a partner with you. Your work is helping to care for those most in need in our community. You are part of something larger, to better serve those who are hungry in our region and who truly need our help.” - **Tamela Luce**, North Penn Community Health Foundation



## Honoring our Staff and Volunteers

*The creativity, dedication and selfless efforts of our staff and volunteers are what makes our programs and services a source of help and hope for thousands of people each year.*

Each year, CSS recognizes dedicated staff members who have reached 10 years or more of service with the agency. We also honor **Employees of the Year** recognized as role models who go beyond the call of duty to further our mission with skill and creativity. This year, we also

honored four exemplary volunteers who chair committees that raise funds to support specific CSS programs. We are grateful for the contributions that each has made to our faith-filled heritage of charitable service to those in need.

### EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR



Over 37 years with CSS, **Aggie Healey-Wilson** has served in various roles caring for and teaching children, most recently as Director of the Out of School Time (OST) Program at Holy Innocents parish. Aggie's work with children and families demonstrates a level of compassion that emulates the tender love of Christ. She goes the extra mile for a child in need, thrives on seeing kids succeed, and has built long-lasting bonds with countless children in disadvantaged communities. *"We are all here for the bottom line, the children. You see them doing well and maturing - that's our main goal."* (Aggie)



**Angela Scharschan** has worked in CSS Finance for 17 years, handling all accounts involving youth services for dependent and delinquent children. That includes St. Gabriel's System, St. Francis & St. Vincent's Homes, Catholic Community Services, and Foster Care. She oversees program contracts with the Department of Human Services (DHS), and navigates well the labyrinth of funding and reporting regulations. She knows the right DHS people to keep communications running smoothly, and helps CSS to do what it does so well, taking care of clients in need. *"We have a good relationship with DHS because it's important, and I am happy to do my part to make the lives of our clients better."* (Angela)



**Lisa Smith** has been with Mercy Hospice since 2007 as Housekeeping Supervisor, yet this hardly does justice to how she goes above and beyond to serve women and children there. In addition to ensuring that the house and resident rooms are in good order, whenever a need arises, Lisa readily responds, "Yes, of course, that is what I am here for!" She welcomes homeless women who come to take a shower at Mercy with genuine and heartfelt concern for them, and makes each woman feel at home. *"Mercy Hospice allows me to do ministry, with love and compassion for the ladies. I believe this is what God wants us to do for them to feel special when they come here, to know that our heart is open to them."* (Lisa)

## OUR AWESOME VOLUNTEERS



Dr. Mark Beaugard



Jeanne Raubenstine



Jacki Delaney



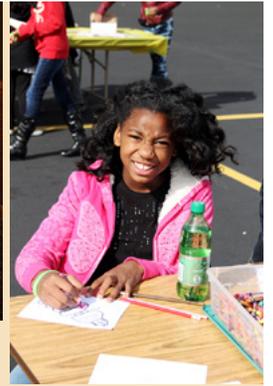
Fran Connell

**Dr. Mark Beaugard** chairs the Development Committee of the Supportive Services to Veteran Families program at a former school building, now known as Operating Base Cecilia, that needed significant renovations. Mark has been a virtual project manager who has found contractors willing to charge less to “give back” to veterans in need. His ambassadorship led to a \$25,000 contribution, and he has been generous himself to the cause. *“I cherish the good work that Catholic Social Services does, and enjoy working with wonderful people. It has been very enriching.”* (Mark)

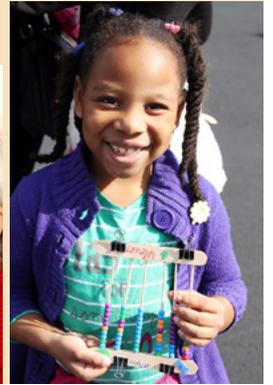
**Jeanne Raubenstine** co-chairs the Advisory Council for the CSS Montgomery County food pantry. Doing good deeds is what Jeanne is all about, who along with husband Clair got involved with food collection and distribution, bringing with them Knights and Dames of Malta to serve once a month. With their support, the Federal Association Order of Malta-Philadelphia obtained a \$25,000 grant to purchase glass-door refrigerators and freezers, part of transforming the pantry into Martha’s Choice Market. Jeanne is happiest engaging in conversation with those seeking assistance, and personifies in word and deed a dedication to mission. *“We came as the vision of converting the pantry to a “choice” marketplace was underway, which we helped to fund. It is gratifying to interact with clients and who appreciate our service to them.”* (Jeanne)

**Jacki Delaney** is someone for whom giving comes naturally who has become a passionate voice for the Archbishop’s Christmas Benefit for Children (ACBC). As Committee Chair she reframed an annual party into a year-round fundraising effort that raised over \$300,000 last year, supporting thousands of at-risk children served by CSS. Jacki brings creative vision and a can-do attitude that asks, “What more can we do, and how can we do it better?” She loves to visit programs supported by the Benefit, and makes each child feel like important and special. Her tireless work and boundless personal generosity reflect a true servant of Christ. *“Through my work with CSS I’ve had opportunity to be with folks that really need help, and let them know that we care. A bond is created between us, by the grace of God.”* (Jacki)

**Fran Connell** came to Saint John’s Hospice with a lifelong desire to serve the homeless and hungry. He chairs the Development Council, supporting annual fundraising efforts which yielded over \$650,000 last year. Fran immerses himself at Saint John’s, spending hours each month to serve meals or greet men in line. A great ambassador to benefactors and motivator for volunteers, Fran has recruited many council members and encourages them to reach out to those with a love for the homeless as potential donors or volunteers. *“I have been blessed to be associated with the men we serve and see their gratitude for what Saint John’s provides them. This is a labor of love where the face of God is shown every day.”* (Fran)



“ I thank all those, of whatever religion, who have sought to serve the God of peace, by building cities of brotherly love, caring for our neighbors in need, defending the dignity of God’s gift of life in all its stages, and defending the cause of the poor and the immigrant. ”  
 – **Pope Francis** (speech at Independence Hall, Philadelphia)



Christmas Edition



CSS  
connections

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES  
 Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
 222 North 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Philadelphia, PA 19103

Donate online at:  
[www.cssphiladelphia.org](http://www.cssphiladelphia.org)

NON-PROFIT  
 ORGANIZATION  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
 PERMIT NO. 138

PROVIDING HELP ~ CREATING HOPE



The Holy Father greets Sally Powers, resident of Divine Providence Village (DPV), along with her mother Marge Powers and brother Bob. To their right is Denis Schwerdtfeger, a former Don Guanella Village resident now residing at DPV, with his mother Mimi Schwerdtfeger, a long-time Developmental Programs Board Services Committee member.