

AT A GLANCE

Volunteers help answer the challenge of Matthew 25:34, which invites each of us to act as if every person needing assistance or advocacy is one of our sisters or brothers. This is done through the following ministries:

■ **Adoption Services** works with pregnant women who are considering adoption and assists families who are seeking to adopt. Search and reunion services are also offered on a mutual consent basis for clients of the agency.

■ **Medical clinics** provide assessments, basic primary care, information about area health resources and education for management of hypertension and diabetes. Clinics are provided with both English- and Spanish-speaking providers and certified interpreters to assure that diagnosis, treatment and patient understanding are accurate.

■ **Development** assists other Catholic Charities ministries pursue funding to help support basic operations and program development. This is done through St. Nicholas Partners, direct donor solicitations, grant writing and special fundraisers such as the Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Golf Classic. This office also coordinates Catholic Relief Services activities in the diocese, including Operation Rice Bowl.

■ **Immigration Services** programs in Springdale and Little Rock help people through the legal steps of immigration for family reunification. They also provide community education and the VAWA program for victims of violence. Missionaries, who work for the diocese, and refugees are also assisted.

■ **Parish Social Ministries** provides education, mentoring and support to parishes as they develop their local ministries. They also coordinate Disaster Response and Parish Assistance.

■ **Social Action** monitors public policies that threaten to mistreat vulnerable groups. This department also focuses on assisting those populations most frequently ignored through coordinating the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, awareness of drug and alcohol issues, and prison ministry.

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Volunteers make the difference

Dedicated, unpaid and at heart of health care ministry for 39 years

Health care is a fundamental ministry in Catholic social teaching, and volunteers at Westside Free Medical Clinic in Little Rock have made that happen for the past 39 years. The volunteers come from all area hospitals, including St. Vincent Health System, Baptist Health System, Arkansas Children's Hospital and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in addition to private practices.

By day, they are known as advanced practice nurses, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, medical doctors, UAMS medical students, pharmacists, UAMS pharmacy students, interpreters, receptionists and office assistants. At least one evening each month, they are known as volunteers for Westside Free Medical Clinic.

The volunteers donated 1,101 hours in 2008 and are on course to increased hours in 2009 since they surpassed 500 hours the first quarter. Volunteers assist directly at the clinic, in private offices and also at health fairs throughout the county, including the homeless outreach event in October and the national free clinic in November.

Over the years, Westside volunteers have been nominated for the Point of Light Award for volunteers from the White House and received the Golden Rule Award from J.C. Penney. They have been presented with two awards from the Arkansas Association of Charitable Clinics. A Spirit of Excellence Award was designated for the volunteers for the Hispanic clinic and a Spirit of Excellence Award was designated for volunteer dermatologist, Dr. Mike Carney.

The volunteers keep the paid staff motivated, and by their selfless service keep them accountable to provide the most possible for



CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF ARKANSAS

Receptionist Rebecca Oulette (left) and UAMS medical student Stella Yeung serve patients at Westside Free Medical Clinic in Little Rock Nov. 4.

each patient, director Karen DiPippa said.

Volunteers may never have a chance to know the impact of their service, but the office is told how they make a world of difference through their kindness, competency and caring. For all, it is a matter of improved quality of life with health care and for some patients, the health care is lifesaving.

Besides practicing medicine, some of the volunteers bake, donate food and educational materials, talk to patients about their families, donate supplies, assist with special

clinics and send monetary donations. After a full work day, volunteers arrive once a month or as often as once a week to serve those people without insurance because they care.

Only with the help of volunteers could the clinic provide 814 patient visits, adding 112 new patients and dispensing 3,013 prescriptions for the 2008 fiscal year. The Westside Free Medical Clinic has a long history with dedicated professionals and religious in its beginning years. Now it gives everyone a chance to provide a mission at home.

Thanks to those sharing fruits of time, talent

"We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you ..."
(Colossians 1:3)

Giving thanks is a frequent theme in the Scriptures, and Thanksgiving is a wonderful season for us to remember to say "thank you" to the many people who collaborate with Catholic Charities of Arkansas in our ministries to those whom we lend a helping hand.

The articles in this section will emphasize the work of more than 500 volunteers a year whose work and activities are a vital component of our programs.

The number of people on the Catholic Charities payroll here in Arkansas is quite small. But each staff member brings their unique professional gifts, and they also have the leadership skills to work with volunteers who share their gifts and talents helping persons with a variety of needs. And since the social ministries of the Church address not

only immediate needs in charitable services but also involve the social justice and systemic components of issues, volunteers can



From the Director
Sister Mary Lou Stubbs

make a difference in society through knowledge, advocacy and action in whichever issue they become involved.

Some visit and comfort prisoners, some help rebuild homes and lives after disasters, some care for the uninsured ill, some provide foster care for infants transitioning to adoptive families, some help form youth for current and future ministries, some provide legal assistance, some reach out to the needs in parishes, some help raise the funding and

awareness that invite even more volunteers to get involved, some support financially, and some support with their prayer.

We are grateful to each and every one — because without them, we could not help as often or as effectively. Each person that shares their gifts in response to God's invitation by helping their less fortunate brothers and sisters in Christ is integral to building the Kingdom on earth.

As the country celebrates Thanksgiving for the harvest and the good things of life, we celebrate in giving thanks to every person who volunteers in any way. As we see the fruits of the earth that load our tables with good things and remind us to give thanks for our daily bread and our loved ones; we similarly see the fruits of voluntarily shared time, talent and treasure in the lives that are changed for the better in those we at Catholic Charities are privileged to help.

On their behalf, and with our own gratitude we say, "Thank you!"

Gifts of food feed their own soul as well

Coworkers make a commitment to bring snacks for clients

Jacqui Blacklaw and Debby Farnam have been coworkers for nearly 20 years. As friendships between coworkers develop through time, so did theirs too. They began sharing stories of their lives and came to find that they shared many common ideals, most especially, a Christian faith that taught them to care for the poor and less fortunate.

During this time, Farnam came to know Patricia Houlihan, former director of Catholic Immigration Services in Little Rock, when a friend received services from the immigration office. Houlihan had also assisted a relative of Blacklaw with adjustment of status. They were so grateful for the assistance that their friend and family member received; they thought they might be able to give back something in return, but were unsure of what two people could do to make a difference.

The immigration office in Little Rock is one of only two non-profit immigration offices that Catholic Charities has in the state that provides low-cost immigration counseling and support services to families and individuals who are eligible for immigration benefits.

Families seeking services from the office often travel far, some more than four hours to seek assistance, said director Maricella Garcia. By the time these clients reach the office for their consultation, their children may have had little or nothing to eat that day.

Recognizing this problem, the immigration office ran an ad in *Arkansas Catholic* for several years asking for donations of food for clients, without any response.

Blacklaw first saw the ad in December 2005 and when she called to find out what the office needed, she was surprised to find that they were only looking for simple things: crackers, cookies and water for clients, something simple to tide the clients over while they waited to be seen.

Together Blacklaw and Farnam decided that they would bring bottled water and snacks to the immigration office.

The first time that they delivered their gifts, the immigration staff was so thankful that the donors were flabbergasted by their appreciation.

"For us, monetarily, it is not that much, less than \$15 each a month. But for these families, which have traveled so far, it might



Coworkers Jacqui Blacklaw and Debby Farnam commit to donate water and snacks for the clients of Catholic Charities Immigration Services in Little Rock each month.

be the only meal they have that day," Blacklaw explained. "To them it is very important."

Each month since, the duo have faithfully provided the Little Rock office with water and snacks for clients. Through their support, they have come to know all the staff of the office and have seen people come and go. For them, it's not about the staff; it's about serving those in need in whatever way they can.

"Think about it," Farnam said. "For me, it is better to give than receive. Although I don't have a lot, I can do this little bit."

Blacklaw said, "I read something that has really stuck with me, it said, 'Nobody gets to heaven without a letter of reference from the poor,' and I thought wow, I mean it just struck me. God calls on us to love all human beings, to care for the poor, the elderly, the widows, the children, the strangers. We help people here because it's the right

thing to do, but it also makes us feel good. We have been blessed to have so much in our lives, and I can't stand the idea that I wouldn't do something for people who have so little."

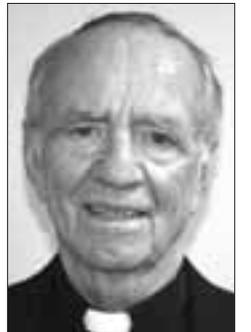
For families coming into the immigration office, their snacks are always a welcome relief after long hours on Arkansas roads, and the staff at Catholic Immigration Services Little Rock, sincerely appreciates their dedication and support even though they balk at receiving any kind of thanks or recognition.

"We don't donate to get any kind of praise; we do it because it is the right thing to do. Everyone can do something, no matter how small to help lift someone's burden," Farnam said.

To assist the immigration office, call Maricella Garcia, director of Catholic Immigration Services Little Rock, at (501) 664-0340.

2009: Catholic Charities marks 35th 'birthday'

Thirty five years ago this month, Father James Savary formalized and incorporated diocesan social services, bringing together programs for the hungry, poor, pregnant women and young mothers, immigrants and parish emergency-services assistance.



Father James Savary

He also led the diocesan relationship with Catholic hospitals across the state and helped get senior services available through the Good Shepherd Ecumenical Retirement Center, which continues under the guidance of Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian and Episcopal leaders in Arkansas. Church-based service activities grew under the tutelage of Bishop Albert Fletcher, whom Father Savary calls "an Abraham Lincoln of a man." Several women religious and Father Joseph Biltz saw the needs, "just started — and it mushroomed," he said.

As Father Savary and his small staff went to parishes to share what he calls "our slant" on living the Gospel through Church-based ministries, activities grew to include a variety of ministries that were assisted by volunteers, many of whom continue to be involved today.

Today Father Savary is retired and living in Little Rock. His enthusiasm continues and his prayer and encouragement of Catholic Charities role in assisting the Church to incarnate the Gospel in parish ministries and centralized programs supports us all.

IMPORTANT DATES

- 1971: Father Savary and Sister Concetta Mazzanti, OSB, start Westside Free Medical Clinic.
- 1974: Catholic Social Services is incorporated. Father James Savary named director of CSS
- 1985: Dennis Lee hired as CSS director
- 1994: Bishop McDonald Golf Classic is established
- 2001: Sheila Gomez hired as CSS director
- 2005: Office name is officially changed to Catholic Charities of Arkansas
- 2007: Sister Mary Lou Stubbs, DC, hired as Catholic Charities director

Volunteers and donations are needed. If interested, contact Catholic Charities of Arkansas at (501) 664-0340 for the following programs or e-mail Sister Mary Lou Stubbs, DC, at mstubbs@dolr.org.

Volunteers

- Disaster Response needs volunteer parish teams to assist with disaster preparation and education and long-term recovery of disaster survivors following disasters. Contact Bridget Barcenas.
- Immigration in Little Rock and Springdale needs volunteers to help catalog client files for digital storage.
- Immigration in Little Rock and Springdale needs volunteer attorneys to assist with complex cases especially in

court. Contact Maricella Garcia or Frank Head.

- Prison Ministry needs volunteers to serve the spiritual and religious needs of Catholic inmates. Contact Tom Navin.

- Westside Medical Clinic needs volunteer specialists, particularly gynecologists, otolaryngologists and endocrinologists to see patients either at the clinic or in their private office(s). Also needed are pharmacist volunteers, bilingual physicians and bilingual volunteers to interpret for patients at appointments arranged through the clinic. Contact Karen DiPippa.

Donations

- Catholic Charities needs a display

board to use at community education programs. Pictures and text are changed for each event so the display needs to be easy to use. Contact Sister Mary Lou.

- Immigration in Little Rock needs three locking lateral file cabinets (five drawer) to store client files and four locking lateral file cabinets (two drawer) for staff use. Also three computers for client lab so that clients can have access to their information online without having to have an appointment.

- VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) program needs baby and children's clothes, toys, diapers, women's clothes, toiletries and backpacks or large totes for domestic violence clients. VAWA also needs financial support and volunteers to help remove victims from emergency



Can YOU help?

situations. Contact Maricella Garcia.

- Immigration in Springdale needs lateral file cabinets (five drawer) for storage of paper files. Contact Frank Head.

- Westside Medical Clinic needs insulated drapes for four windows in the pharmacy. Contact Karen DiPippa.

Nun ministers to inmates by discussing her bad decisions

Sister Miriam spends two days a week at Newport prison

BY MALEA HARGETT
EDITOR

At one point in her life, Sister Miriam Burns, OSB, was a lot more like the women she ministers to each week in prison than she is the sisters at Holy Angels Convent in Jonesboro.

For the past six months, Sister Miriam has dedicated her ministry to serving the women at the McPherson Unit, a state prison in Newport. She is one of nine Catholics who are certified religious assistants through the Arkansas Department of Correction. She coordinates her ministry through Tom Navin, Catholic Charities' prison ministry director.

She also participates in Christian prison retreats similar to Cursillo called Kairos two times a year at the McPherson Unit. She was recently appointed to the local Kairos advisory board.

"When I minister at the prison, I see myself in them. I know that any of their stories could have been me," she said.

As a CRA, Sister Miriam is given clearance to walk freely among the barracks every Tuesday and Friday to talk to any of the 600 prisoners sentenced to the unit.

"I go into all the barrack areas, and I try to hit every barrack before I leave on Friday," she said. "I am available. I am getting to know a lot of women now because there are so many that are open to me. It is unbelievable. I am relating to so many of them."

The native of El Dorado admits she had a "very hard" childhood. She left home when she was 17 years old and jumped around to a variety of things, including going to college, working as a waitress, joining the Air Force and getting married. She strayed from her Catholic upbringing and admits she made some bad decisions.



Sister Miriam Burns, OSB, prays with several inmates at the McPherson Unit in Newport. The Benedictine sister has been volunteering there for the past six months.

"I didn't believe in God. I had no faith," she said.

Privately, while visiting the inmates, she shares details of her past before she joined the convent when she was 32 years old.

"I know that the best thing I can do for them is 'listen, listen, love, love' — our call in Kairos's prison retreats," she said. "I try to do that every time I am with them. When I hear them speak about the poor choices they have made, it calls to mind my own. Sometimes I feel it helps tremendously to reveal some of my past, poor choices. When I do, it seems like hearts are opened and 'walls come tumbling down.' They are moved by that, and God seems to work quickly to touch their own lives and draw them closer to him to believe in his great mercy and love for them and especially to give them hope."

Navin said, "Finally we have a certified religious assistant to reach out and spend time with the women inmates. She is full of

life. She exudes hope and friendliness to a group that has a hard time making friends."

Now at 62 years old, Sister Miriam said she is working in a ministry that fits her perfectly. Since joining the convent in 1979, she has worked as a teacher, formation director, vocations director, youth minister and pastoral associate.

"Many of these women have never felt loved in their whole life," she said. "When they experience God's mercy, forgiveness and love, as I did over 30 years ago, they too begin to change. It is a joy for me to go visit the inmates and see God's presence working there. It is also a great joy when he allows me to be a part of that."

Sister Miriam said many of the inmates are interested in talking to the nun walking around in a black habit. They sincerely want questions about the Christian and Catholic faith answered. She is able to give Bibles and rosaries to the Catholic inmates, and she is

encouraging women who are interested in returning to the faith or becoming Catholic to join the RCIA program. Father Paul Worm of Batesville comes each Thursday night to celebrate Mass and hear confessions.

Most of the time Sister Miriam's ministry is just her presence as a good and holy woman who wants to help these women change their lives.

"God saved me from myself," she said.

She has a general message she likes to deliver to each woman.

"When I got out on my own, I made my own choices and I made a lot of wrong choices," she tells them. "It's your choice; you've got to learn to make better choices or you are just going to come right back here... I promise you there is something better. This happiness comes from knowing my God."

Sister Miriam said her return to the Catholic faith began after she got divorced in the 1970s and started to pray and go to Mass again.

"It was at the age of 30 when I first started looking closely at God and saw that I never had a personal relationship with him," she said. "I began understanding what all he had done for me, despite my many, many, poor choices in my life. I began to see that I was my own worst enemy, not people in my past or present. I realized that, if it had not of been for the unlimited grace and mercy of God, I would not have even been alive."

She decided to return to her hometown and began to look into joining a religious order. On Aug. 9, 1979, she was accepted as a candidate at Holy Angels Convent.

"I have been there ever since," she said.

She said she is thankful that prioress Sister Mary Ann Nuce, OSB, asked her to take on this new ministry.

"I taught religion for over 25 years with pay," she said. "Now my community is allowing me to spend many hours of travel and time at the prison — all volunteer work. What an awesome responsibility, what an awesome privilege."

BRIEFS

■ **A NEW HOME:** Catholic Charities is often contacted by families with numerous needs and the goal is to provide assistance when possible or refer those in need to agencies that may be able to provide assistance. In October, the office was contacted by a homeless family with multiple needs and, as if by divine intervention, the same week the office was also contacted by Diocese of Little Rock employee Kelley Renard, who wanted to donate a mobile camper.

After several meetings with the family, Renard delivered the camper to St. John Center in Little Rock and the family is now living comfortably in the camper in Pulaski County.

■ **TRAFFICKING HELP:** Through new funding from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Charities is now paying up to \$1,300 in basic living expenses a month to victims of human trafficking. Catholic Charities is also doing case management and assisting with legal fees for each qualifying victim. These services are in addition to the current activities done to assist them in obtaining their appropriate visas.

■ **REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT EXPANDS:** Catholic Charities has a new contract with the U.S. State Department, allowing for the expansion of refugee



Diocesan employee Kelley Renard donated a camper trailer for a family who lost home and job when an apartment building was closed.

resettlement. Refugee resettlement has been a part of Catholic Charities of Arkansas for more than 30 years. The \$75,000-a-year agreement will allow for the hiring of a full-time resettlement specialist and for expanded programming to assist the families. Frank Head oversees the program based in Springdale.

■ **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE GRANT:** Catholic Immigration Services Little Rock received a \$151,500 STOP (Services Training Officers Prosecutors) Violence Against Women grant from the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration to help better serve victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating

violence, trafficking and other violent crimes.

The first Immigration Rapid Response Team has been trained at the University of Arkansas Bowen School Of Law, where approximately 20 students spent two days learning about immigration remedies for victims of crimes. Ultimately, six parishes and six local law enforcement agencies will be trained to coordinate and serve victim's needs over the 22-month grant period.

■ **GIFTS FOR A GOOD CAUSE:** Catholic Charities is hosting a Work of Human Hands sale Nov. 30 through Dec. 4 in Morris Hall at St. John Center in Little Rock. Sale items include jewelry, Christmas ornaments, scarves and other hand-crafted items from around the world. Pictures with Santa will also be available. The Work of Human Hands program is a partnership between Catholic Relief Services and SERRV, nonprofit organizations dedicated to fighting poverty. Ten percent of the profits of the sale will benefit the Catholic Charities Parish Emergency Assistance program.

The sale will be open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Santa will be available from 10 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 1 and Thursday, Dec. 3. For more information, contact Rebecca Spencer at (501) 664-0340.

'St. Nicholas' artist shares many gifts

The ministries of the Church are usually a team effort among many people and this is also true for the services provided through Catholic Charities of Arkansas.

People from many diocesan departments reach out to those in need and share their gifts. One diocesan employee who does this consistently is Cathy France. In addition to her full-time role in the Diaconate Office, she shares her many talents to help Catholic Charities, including her wonderful gift for art.

France grew up in Memphis, Tenn., and received a bachelor's degree in interior design at the University of Memphis. She moved to Little Rock in 1985 and started working for the Diocese of Little Rock in 2004.

"I have done art ever since I can remember," France said. "My mom said that even as a small child I colored in the lines. I have always been drawing, sketching, sewing or otherwise creating things."

France paints a variety of subjects, using mostly watercolors and oils. Her interest in religious art grew after attending theology classes at St. John Center.

"I decided this was a good way to combine my artistic talent and my newly gained knowledge of theology," she said.

For France, her art is a ministry — a visual way to reach out to others who want to realize the presence of God and the saints in a more personal manner. She has been doing visual aids for the diaconate formation class and RCIA participants, such as a pictorial Church history timeline. This year, she did the artwork of St. Nicholas at the request of Catholic Charities.

In addition to the St. Nicholas artwork, France donated an original painting to this year's Bishop McDonald Golf Classic Auction and Cocktail Party. Her painting helped raise additional funds for Catholic Charities. She has been a committed member of the Catholic Adoption Services board of directors since the early 1990s.

In 2006, she helped Catholic Charities host a Hunger Banquet to promote Catholic Relief Services. Using her interior design skills, she created an atmosphere in Fletcher Lounge that clearly underscored the mes-



Cathy France, secretary for the diocese's diaconate office, stands before her painting, "Annunciation." France donated her artwork of St. Nicholas to this year's fundraising appeal.

sage of the Hunger Banquet.

Over the years, France has assisted with the Golf Classic in a variety of capacities and is always willing to lend a hand with every-

thing from stuffing envelopes to sign-making. Catholic Charities benefits in so many ways from Cathy's willingness to share her time and various talents.

Staff salutes work by volunteers in special projects

Catholic Charities volunteers are vital to making fundraisers and programs a success. Here are three programs or offices that want to highlight the special work done by volunteers.

■ Catholic Adoption Service board, foster parents and donors

November is National Adoption Month and Catholic Adoption Services would like to take this opportunity to thank our wonderful volunteers for their faithful service to our agency and to those whom we are privileged to serve. Especially during the 25th anniversary year of being a licensed child placement agency, we thank our board of directors who assist us in maintaining our licensed status. The board members are Suzanne McCarthy, Cathy France, Dr. Bruce Schratz and David Menz.

We also share our heartfelt appreciation for our amazing foster parent families who provide short-term loving care for infants awaiting adoptive placement. Our deep thanks go out to Sara and Dennis Kordsmeier; Linda and Craig Bowlby, Lisa and Calvin Bohannon and Stacy and Brian Watkins.

Another special volunteer we really want to recognize is Helen Nugent. Over the years, Helen has provided counseling and client support in special situations. She has also given much needed assistance with our annual Christmas card campaign and other confidential office help.

The amazing Ladies of the Sacred Heart at the Sacred Heart Parish in Hot Springs Village continue to supply us with all the wonderful baby items we can use.

We do ask that all of you continue to support us with your prayers as we go on to the next 25 years of bringing families together through the blessing of adoption.

— Antje Harris

■ Operation Rice Bowl coordinators

A special mention is in order to all those in the diocese who coordinate the annual Operation Rice Bowl campaign on behalf of their parishes and schools. Sometimes the coordinator is the pastor himself or the school principal. Sometimes it is the DRE or youth minister. Often, this person is the parish secretary or a teacher. Regardless of who takes on the role of Operation Rice Bowl

coordinator, one thing is likely to be true: She or he has a million other responsibilities to attend to as well. Yet in spite of this, the diocese's Operation Rice Bowl campaign continues to grow each year, and the diocese becomes a stronger force in the fight against global hunger. The 2009 collection was the largest ever in the Diocese of Little Rock.

— Rebecca Spencer

■ Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Golf Classic volunteers

Every fall, the Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Golf Classic gets a lot of coverage in *Arkansas Catholic*. We would certainly be remiss if we did not once again acknowledge that without volunteers, the Golf Classic would not be the annual success that it is. Throughout its 15-year history, more volunteers have supported the Golf Classic than can be named here. And to those brave and committed souls who, over the years, have volunteered to take on the enormous responsibility of overseeing and coordinating the entire event — our sincerest and most heartfelt gratitude.

— Rebecca Spencer



This St. Nicholas Partners 2009 program artwork appears on special Christmas cards seeking support for Catholic Charities' programs.

Questions on St. Nicholas Partners

■ What is St. Nicholas Partners?

St. Nicholas Partners is a special annual appeal to help raise money for the Catholic Charities programs that provide services directly to those who are in need:

- Adoption Services
- Immigration Services
- Prison Ministry
- Westside Free Medical Clinic
- Refugee Resettlement
- Parish Emergency Assistance
- Services to Victims of Domestic Violence
- Disaster Response

■ How is it different from other Catholic Charities fundraisers?

It's different in two ways. First, it makes it easier for donors ("partners") to designate which Catholic Charities program they want their contribution to support. Second, because the appeal occurs right before Christmas, a donation on behalf of a friend or family member makes a perfect gift.

■ What makes St. Nicholas Partners special?

Each year, an original design depicting St. Nicholas is created and generously donated to Catholic Charities by an area artist. This artwork then becomes a "Christmas card" distributed by Catholic Charities and inviting everyone to help support the ministry of their choice.

■ I've never gotten one of these Christmas cards. How do I get one?

The cards will be sent to people on the Catholic Charities mailing list and were inserted in the Nov. 21 issue of *Arkansas Catholic*. You can also contact Rebecca Spencer to become part of this year's St. Nicholas Partners appeal.

■ Anything else?

Between July 2008 and June 2009, the Catholic Charities programs provided more than 35,000 services to 7,164 clients. For many of those who receive assistance from Catholic Charities, the holiday season can be particularly painful. Please help us continue to help them by supporting St. Nicholas Partners this year.