**Immigration office gets $450,000**

Grant will allow staff to continue helping abused women

Catholic Charities recently was approved for a renewal of a grant by the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women. The funds are allocated through the Catholic Charities Immigration Service offices in Rock and Springfield. The award is for $446,714 over the next two years.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE VAWA PROGRAM?

The federal Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program is intended to increase the availability of civil and criminal legal assistance to adult and youth survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking or sexual assault who need help in legal matters after that abuse or violence.

In the case of the immigrant survivors served by the VAWA program, these legal issues become even more complex. Inherently, the abuse of immigrant survivors is for the abuser to prevent them from exercising legal rights. In many cases, the survivor cannot access the healthcare, education or workplace needed for their legal status or other services needed. Abusers often threaten the survivor with deportation if they do not comply.

The legal issues for immigrant survivors are unique to the immigration status. Abusers may threaten to deport only the children, or force the mother to choose whether to comply with immigration law or lose her children.

HOW DOES THE VAWA PROGRAM HELP?

The Catholic Charities VAWA program helps survivors determine their eligibility for immigration relief and helps them pursue those options. By attaining legal status, survivors are empowered to escape their current situation.

Immigration myths . . . . 12

### Catholic Charities grows from roots of Gospel

L\ike a tree growing from the roots of the Gospel, the ministries of the Church branch out in many directions to address problematic life issues that harm people in this world of ours. Social doctrines evolve through biblical statements about the social situations. This help to expand our understanding and become the growing trunk of the tree. Sorting the wisdom into general areas called Catholic social teachings provides branches filled with life from the root. These branches lift the leaves of life issues up to the sun and their themes are visible behind every ministry and service that sprouts from the study of the signs of the times, Church teachings and Scripture, and a spirit of prayer open to God's will.

The role of Catholic Charities in each diocese varies based on the emerging needs within that diocese. One of Charities' basic roles is to assist parishes to develop social ministries, which address the unique realities of the vicinity served by that parish. The other is to provide services which cannot be done effectively by parishes alone. Here in Arkansas, programs are continually growing and adapting to address changing realities, needs and resources.

And what are the main branches of concern for the Church in this country in this century? First, and underlying all, is the life and dignity of each person which includes our mutual call to family, community and participation; our protection of the rights of all and awareness of responsibilities of each; a compassionate option to care for the poor and vulnerable; respect for the
Bishop McDonald joins Golf Classic events

Bishop Andrew J. McDonald, bishop emeritus of the Diocese of Little Rock, returned to Little Rock from Illinois to celebrate with a record crowd of participants at the 14th annual Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Golf Classic Sept. 29. Bishop McDonald also celebrated Mass in Morris Chapel and mingled with guests at the auction and cocktail party the evening before.

An overflow crowd gathered in Morris Hall for the auction and cocktail party Sunday, Sept. 29. This year marked the first time the event was held at St. John Center, and many guests were delighted with the new location.

Nearly 200 auction items were donated and available for bidding. The auction alone earned more than $10,000 for Catholic Charities. A variety of food and desserts were donated by local restaurants, individuals and parish groups, and beer and wine were once again generously provided by Glazer Distributors of Arkansas. Saxophonist Michael Eubanks helped create a festive atmosphere throughout the evening.

The next morning, players gathered at Maumelle Country Club for a day of golf, contests and more food. The tournament raised about $47,000 for several Catholic Charities programs. The tournament was blessed with perfect weather, and the impeccable planning of the golf committee made the day a huge success. The St. Bernard’s Healthcare team won first place in the championship flight, with Metro Builders Supply and Glazer Distributors placing second and third.

Volunteer Alice Dennis once again served as chairwoman for the Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Golf Classic. Dennis oversaw the planning of the auction, cocktail party and golf tournament.

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well without a lot of sleep and wants to participate in this labor of love, call director Antje Harris at (501) 664-0340 for more information. We need a family who lives in the Little Rock area, has a flexible schedule, and is not trying to add to their family by adoption. Medical and parenting experience is also appreciated.

Videoconferencing center opens at Springdale office

Through a $10,000 grant from the Daughters of Charity, the northwest office of Catholic Charities Immigration Services now benefits from a state-of-the-art training facility. In order to keep pace with rapidly changing immigration law and federally mandated training, Catholic Charities has installed a videoconferencing center with two large video screens and networking software in a Webinar-ready study room. The center also has a laptop computer, projector and screen for presentations. The center also will be used for community networking events.

Staff member to join homeless shelter board

Tom Navin, director of social action and prison ministry, was recently named to the board of Our House. The organization in Little Rock provides the working homeless — families and individuals — with safe, clean, comfortable housing, food, free child care, education and job training in order that they may return to independence and lead productive lives.

National association comes to Arkansas

Catholic Charities of Arkansas is a member of the one of the nation’s largest social service networks, Catholic Charities USA, whose membership of more than 250,000 staff and volunteers serves more than seven million people annually. This relationship provides the diocesan organization with connections that assist us to serve the people of Arkansas more effectively.

During the first week of November, dignify of work and the rights of workers; our international solidarity as brothers and sisters in Christ, and a shared concern and care for all of creation.

Roots and branches — Gospel and ministry — must be a dynamic reality to help the kingdom of God grow on earth. And if we believe that Jesus is the vine and we are the branches (John 15:5), we must be in a dynamic, living relationship with him so the fruit we bear will be worthy of our efforts.

The programs of Catholic Charities of Arkansas are formalized ministries of the Church in Arkansas, therefore every Catholic participates in the fruits of those ministries. The stories and information in this special section of Arkansas Catholic provide a small glimpse into the day-to-day care given to persons whose lives are at a crisis point or who are weighed down with problems they cannot fully handle on their own.

There are many more ministries that we as the Church in Arkansas share, some of them organized at the diocesan level, some by organizations, and some by parishes. Each, as an intentional ministry of a Church community, answers the invitation of the Gospel and becomes a small branch (or even a twig) on the tree. Each little ministry branch responds to one or more needs in our imperfect world and bears good fruit because it is connected to, and continually fed by, its roots. Many branches, many ministries, yet all are one tree. Let us continue to grow together.

Better health

Westside Free Medical Clinic’s Flor Lopez (left) provides information on the clinic services available to Spanish speaking patients to Consul staff member Oscar Mora Lopez at the recent health fair at the Mexican Consulate. Catholic Charities of Arkansas participated Oct. 7 in the Binational Health Week at the Mexican Consulate in Little Rock. It was the eighth annual health promotion for the Latino community and the Mexican nationals living in Arkansas. Bridget White, an immigration specialist at Catholic Charities Immigration Services in Little Rock, also attended to hand out materials on immigration services.

Roots

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Our House chairman Lynn Hamilton (left) congratulates Tom Navin on being named to the Our House board.

Robert Colbert, vice president of mission integration at CCUSA, visited all of the Catholic Charities programs in Arkansas. He listened to staff about their current services and their hopes for the future and began to provide links into the resources of the national system. National services include five main areas: networking through gatherings, specialty groups and Web-based discussion groups; training and consultation in the areas of leadership, mission and service, volunteerism, disaster and more; a national voice in advocacy, media relations and program development; financial assistance through shared donations, disaster relief grants and scholarships; and program development as needed by local Charities agencies.

As CCUSA moves toward its 100th anniversary in 2010, three of its major programs revolve around cutting the poverty rate in the U.S. by 50 percent by the year 2020; addressing the link between poverty and racism; and providing guidance to local groups as they develop their code of ethics.
Bringing social ministry to your parish

Are you on the outreach/peace and justice committee? On the pastoral council? On a parish staff? A parishioner interested in social service and community outreach?

Not listed here? Never fear, the Parish Social Ministry Office works with a wide range of parish folks. After all, social ministry is the work of every baptized Christian. Grounded in this belief, we work with Catholic parishes to develop and foster their social programs and outreach ministry. This means that we are a resource for support, guidance and information on a variety of topics and possibilities for your parish’s social ministry. We offer workshops, retreat days and educational sessions on Catholic social teaching and social concerns topics.

**OUR MISSION:**
Catholic Charities Parish Social Ministry works with parishes to foster their social justice and outreach ministry, educates parishioners to serve those who are poor and vulnerable through both charity and justice, and provides opportunities for the spiritual development of individuals in this ministry.

**WHAT IS PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY?**
Rooted in the U.S. bishops’ statement “Communities of Salt and Light: Reflections on the Social Ministry of the Parish,” Catholic Charities Parish Social Ministry works to help parishes realize the vision of an integrated model of social ministry.

“Parish social ministry is the empowerment of the parish as the people of God to fulfill the Church’s mission of love, justice, freedom, and peace by communally responding in an organized way to social and individual human needs.” — Parish Social Ministry: A Vision and Resource; a Catholic Charities Perspective, Catholic Charities USA

“Parish Social Ministry is simply the effort to organize the Church’s ever-broadening love for the world.” — Jack Jaenzl, founder of JustFaith Ministries

**WHAT DO YOU OFFER TO PARISHES?**
Looking for opportunities for retreat days, educational sessions or social justice? Information on social concerns issues? Advocacy? The office will discuss with you your parish’s needs and possibilities. We can offer help and support in these areas of your parish ministry. We encourage parishes to develop their social ministry to include both charity and justice rooted and grounded in the spiritual growth and development of their members.

**WHAT IS CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING?**
The Church’s social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society.

**THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING**

■ Call to family community and participation
■ Rights and responsibilities
■ Preferential option for and with people who are poor
■ Dignity of work and the rights of workers
■ Solidarity
■ Care for God’s creation

**WHERE DID IT COME FROM?**
Catholic social teaching comes out of the rich history of papal encyclicals, bishops’ letters and other official documents that focus on the economic, political and social concerns of humanity. This teaching is rooted in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures as well as in traditional philosophical and theological teachings of the Church. In 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued an encyclical titled “Rerum Novarum” (On the Condition of Labor). In the more than 100 years since then, many other documents have spoken to issues of vital concern of the time.

**HOW CAN PARISHES PARTICIPATE IN CATHOLIC CHARITIES?**
There are many opportunities for parish involvement with Catholic Charities. Our programs that serve those in need in our diocese rely on volunteers to help fulfill our mission.

Catholic social teaching workshops provided by Catholic Charities Parish Social Ministry include:

■ The Spirituality and Challenge of Catholic Social Teaching;
■ Using the seven major themes, explores the ways we as a Church have applied our understanding of Scripture to the realities of life in our world today.
■ Following the Footsteps of Jesus: An introduction to Catholic social teaching for adults or teens, and includes input, drawing on experience and practical application.

**WHERE ON EARTH DID THESE DOCUMENTS COME FROM?**
The development of Catholic social teaching through movements at the grassroots level reflecting on the social, historical, religious and philosophical factors of the time.

**The Parish Social Ministry Office, in conjunction with the Vincentian Evangelization Team, offers a workshop called an “Introduction to Parish Social Ministry.”**
Parishes are encouraged to contact Jamie Deere to schedule a course offering for their parish and the diocese will bring the course to your parish or region as needed beginning in January 2009 and beyond. For more information or to schedule a course offering, contact Jamie Deere at (501) 664-0340 or jdeere@dolzorg.

**Abuse**
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legal representation in matters of child support, child custody, legal separation and orders of protection.


One of the new goals of the 2008/2010 grant cycle is to create a comprehensive resource booklet in Spanish and Vietnamese. The resource booklet will contain a volunteer interpreter list, safety plan, fact sheets relating to domestic violence and pertinent legal processes, and other key resources available to immigrant survivors of domestic violence. The resource booklet will be distributed to immigrant survivors, shelters and other service providers.

Also new this grant cycle is the emphasis on training law enforcement and court officials, health department workers and clergy.

In this way, survivors’ situations may be dealt with holistically rather than simply being viewed as a matter for Immigration Customs and Enforcement.

While the grant covers nearly all the administrative expenses, there is still a tremendous need for direct assistance to meet the basic needs of survivors. Housing (often involving complete relocation), food, transportation, clothing and counseling are all integral parts of providing total safety and security for survivors of domestic violence. If you would like to help by making a donation to the Catholic Charities VAWA program, contact Rebecca Spencer at (501) 664-0340 or jdeere@dolzorg.
Myths vs. facts: What you should know

BY MARICELLA GARCIA  
CATHOLIC CHARITIES IMMIGRATION SERVICES

M any people discount immigration reform because they believe it is an “amnesty” or because they feel that immigrants should have to follow the rules and stand in line, or even because of fear of changing values.

However, many of these distinctions are being made on the basis of myths that have no real basis in reality. In this article, we will explore three common myths to help understand the immigration phenomenon.

MYTH #1: MOST IMMIGRANTS CROSS THE BORDER ILLEGALLY

According to the Department of Homeland Security, around 75 percent of today’s immigrants have legal permanent residence. Of the remaining 25 percent, 40 percent entered legally with a visa. Most immigrants are not in the U.S. illegally and we have to make sure that we don’t assume “immigrant” means “illegal.” There are many categories of immigrants — too many to list here — but it is important to note that legal immigration to the U.S. far outpaces “illegal” immigration.

MYTH #2: MOST ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS COULD BECOME U.S. CITIZENS; THEY JUST DON’T WANT TO

This myth has several layers that we need to explore to fully understand. First, there is no program that allows you to go from undocumented to citizen. You can’t just become a citizen. You have to immigrate first as a resident and then, in most cases, you must go through additional legal steps. You must prove that you deserve it by virtue of activities like working, paying taxes and showing that you are a person of good moral character.

But, the larger issue underlying this myth is the idea that most immigrants could somehow adjust their status, but they refuse to do so. This is not true. Of the estimated 12 million undocumented immigrants, most actually have no ability to adjust to a legal status in this country. Stricter regulations implemented in 1996 mean that an immigrant unlawfully present in the United States for more than 180 days who then leaves the country is barred from re-entry for either three or 10 years, depending on the length of the unlawful stay. Furthermore, if you have been unlawfully present and have multiple entries into the U.S., they can be subject to a permanent bar.

MYTH #3: IF WE LET TOO MANY IMMIGRANTS IN, AMERICA WILL LOSE ITS CULTURAL HERITAGE

America should not be about “us” and “them.” We are not defined by one culture or race. With the exception of Native Americans, all Americans are descendants of immigrants in one form or another. Therefore, we should understand the importance of allowing people the opportunity to make better lives for themselves and their families. American culture, whatever it is, is not tied to one group. Instead of worrying that somehow America will be diminished or altered by too many new immigrants, we should celebrate the diversity that makes our country great.

Changing our perspective on such a difficult issue as immigration can be hard. But, the next time that you generalize about immigrants, I would ask you to question what underlies your feelings. Are you scared by talk of “waves of illegal immigrants,” are you worried about immigrants’ refusing to assimilate, or are you worried about changing cultural values? If so, I would encourage you to get the facts on immigration. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has created an organization called Justice for Immigrants, which provides facts about myths of immigration. You can get more information at www.justiceforimmigrants.org.

At Catholic Charities Immigration Services, I can safely say that these myths are not reality. We work to reunite families, help regularize the status of people who have waited patiently (sometimes for years) to get here, and most importantly offer new immigrants the opportunity to become a part of the American dream.

Can YOU help?

Funding to support programs comes from a variety of sources, some of which is from specific programs.

Grants and diocesan funds, including Catholic Arkansas Sharing Appeal, provide support to many programs.

How we are funded

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Grants and diocesan funds, including Catholic Arkansas Sharing Appeal, provide support to many programs. Funding for programs, such as the annual Bishop McDonald-Catholic Charities Golf Classic each fall and the party which precedes it, help fill financial gaps.

All funds are used as designated by the donors. Collections for our programs and recovery pass through a carefully monitored system directly to the victims of those disasters.