

CATHOLIC FAMILY SERVICE INC.

A Newsletter To Our Friends



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Becoming People of Prayer and Action

In the tenth chapter of Luke's gospel, right after the parable of the Good Samaritan, we read of the visit of Jesus and his disciples to the home of Mary and Martha. Martha was the one who welcomed Jesus and his followers, and busied herself with all the details of hospitality. Mary was the one who sat attentively at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. We might be tempted, in reflecting on this important passage from the gospel, to draw the wrong conclusions.

One of those conclusions is that prayer and action are somehow incompatible, that we must choose either being an active disciple or a somewhat passive contemplative. Another mistaken conclusion we might draw is that the Lord prefers we all be like Mary and simply sit at his feet and listen attentively.

I think this gospel passage has another message for us, and one that is so fitting for the kind of work we do at Catholic Family Service. The core of that message is that we are constantly challenged to seek a balance in our lives between our attentive listening to the Lord in prayer, and then carrying out the Lord's mission through our daily service of others. Seems pretty simple, doesn't it? Most of us in our American culture of the 21st century admire people of action. We aren't much for meditation; it might even seem like a waste of valuable time. Those of us engaged in social service ministry are not immune to this prevailing mentality. We want to help the person in front of us with all their presenting needs, and then move on to the next person and the next

one and so on. But at a deeper level, we yearn for a place at the Lord's feet where we are nourished by his teaching word. Pope Benedict XVI, in his very first encyclical letter, "God is Love," writes on the fundamental importance for people of faith to be committed to both prayer and action. We can't act in charity and justice year in and year out without being firmly rooted in a spiritual life. And we can't have a rich spiritual life that doesn't express itself in charity toward our neighbor.

In striving to carry out the mission of CFS to serve "the least among us," each one of us, staff, Board members, volunteers, and Friends, are challenged

to find that balance of deep prayer and robust action on behalf of the poor. I am convinced that we will be better servants of those most in need the more we are rooted in our spiritual life, and thus will be more effective in our mission. As we continue to work together, may we combine in ourselves the best of both Martha and Mary, and challenge each other to be prayerful, active disciples of the Lord!

Sincerely,

Jeff Malpiede

CFS Set to Begin Building Addition

For the past year, Catholic Family Service has been planning an expansion of its main facility at 102 Ave. J in Lubbock. The current building that houses offices for Emergency Assistance, Adult and Family Counseling, Youth At Risk Program, Self Sufficiency, Legalization, Rural Community Organizing, and administration, was purchased in 1993.

CFS has simply outgrown the space available in the current building, as programs and services have expanded considerably over the years. The Facility Expansion Project will include approximately 4,000 square feet of new construction, and renovation of about 900 square feet of the existing building. This renovation and expansion will allow the staff and volunteers to better serve the thousands of people who come through our doors each

year in need of assistance.

This project will include the following: addition of six additional offices for youth at risk counselors and Emergency Assistance, a new conference/multipurpose room for community meetings and youth activities, new public restrooms that are fully handicap accessible, an expanded main entrance, expanded pantry, more storage for equipment and records, and a second meeting room that will allow for two meetings to be held in the building at the same time.

The goal of this expansion project is to help CFS better serve the increasing number of people that request services each year, to be able to employ more volunteers, and to provide a larger food pantry that will be able to take in more

(See **Building**, Page Two)



Catholic Family Service, Inc. Diocese of Lubbock

102 Ave J Lubbock, Texas 79401 806-765-8475 806-765-8630 (fax) www.cfslubbock.org

Directory of Programs and Services Central Administration: CFS Primary Office Site Lubbock..... 765-8475

Administrative Services, Finance, Emergency Assistance, Immigration, Adult Counseling, Self Sufficiency Program

At-Risk Youth Services Lubbock..... 806-765-84751-800-530-4704 Brownfield 637-1651 Crosbyton 675-0474 Dimmitt..... 647-0323 Haskell 940-864-5188 Levelland 894-6235 Plainview..... 296-7044 Quanah..... 940-663-2876 Vernon 940-553-3334

Resale Center\Thrifty Store Lubbock..... 763-8315

Elderly Outreach Services Lubbock..... 765-2611

Program Directors

- Jeff Malpiede Executive Director - Jeff@cfslubbock.org Cynthia Quintanilla Administrative Assistant Dick McCann At-Risk Youth Program Director Sam Ortegon Family Life Service Coordinator Virginia Alamanza Emergency Assistance Coordinator Reyes Pequeno Rural Community Organizer Sabrina Robbins Self-Sufficiency Program Coordinator John Vasquez Resale Center Director Rosario Jimenez Immigration Coordinator

CFS Food Pantry Being Emptied Quickly

The food pantry at Catholic Family Service has seen a growth in usage during the past year, and the requests for food during these summer months remains especially high. The Emergency Assistance staff and volunteers have stayed busy trying to keep the pantry shelves stocked and the freezers full, but the number of individuals and families needing help has continued to climb, in part because of rising food costs and other household expenses.

Low-income families find it especially hard to provide a balanced diet that includes fresh fruits and vegetables, given the higher prices for so many basic commodities. Meat, milk and milk products, fresh produce: all of these basics have risen more rapidly during the past year. For the agency's fiscal year that ended June 30, 2007, a total of 3,122 individuals and families were assisted with food from the CFS pantry. A typical (See Food Pantry, Page Three)

Prescription Drug Card Offers Help to Many

Last spring, CFS initiated a program that is offering substantial assistance to individuals and families who struggle to pay for expensive brand name prescription medications. A Prescription Drug Discount card has been distributed through all the parishes in the Lubbock Diocese free of charge to anyone who would benefit from this service.

Plains already participate in the program, so the cards are widely accepted. If a pharmacy is not yet part of the program, signing up is simple. The cards are printed in English and Spanish, and contain all the information a person needs in order to obtain medications at a discount.

The program mostly benefits uninsured and underinsured people, but also can be of help to those whose health plan does not cover some drugs. The goal of this program is to get the cards into the hands of anyone who would benefit from using them. To date, about 15,000 cards have been distributed, and they offer savings from 10-60% off the retail price of any given medication.

If you would like some of these cards to use, or to give to family members and neighbors, please contact the CFS office in Lubbock at 765-8475. Reports we have received since the cards were initially distributed tell us that they are helping people save significant money on their needed medications.

A large number of pharmacies across the South

Again, there is no charge for this program, no signing up or personal information collected, only the potential for significant savings for medications in time of need.

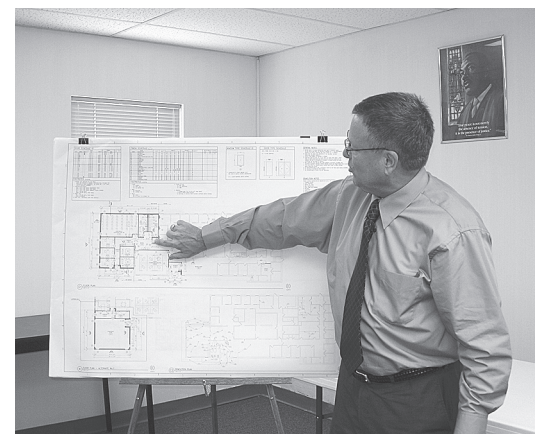
New addition to building (from Page One)

donations and consequently feed more families. The funding for this project so far has come from three main sources: the sale of the old CFS offices on Ave. N in Lubbock, grants from the CH Foundation, the Catholic Extension Society and the Scanlan Foundation, and from agency reserve funds that have been built up over many years. Additional grant funding is currently being sought.

It represents another important milestone in the 23-year history of this social service agency for the Diocese of Lubbock.

At this time, CFS is working to secure a contract with the firm that will build the new addition and carry out the renovations. It is anticipated that the groundbreaking for the project will take place sometime this fall, with construction taking six to eight months.

The Board, staff and volunteers of CFS are all very grateful to our generous supporters who have enabled us to embark on this much needed expansion.



Jeff Malpiede goes over building plans.

Rural Organizing Project Nearing Three Year Point

Catholic Family Service began its Rural Community Organizing Project in October of 2004, and has gradually built the Project in the three rural counties of Crosby, Garza and Hockley, which are near the "Hub" city of Lubbock. Since its inception, the Project has sought to empower people in rural communities to find their voice and to use their collective power to dialogue with political and business leaders in working to effect positive change. The community organizer for this Project has discovered that a significant number of people, many of whom are from lower-income backgrounds, have not had the opportunity to work together with others who want to make positive contributions to their local community. The organizer has found a willingness of many people to take part in "house meetings," during which participants come to know each other's interests and background better, and then to identify problems in their community that need to be addressed. Some of these problems include: drug and alcohol availability to minors, the growing number

of teenage pregnancies, high stakes school testing (the TAKS test), and the lack of positive alternative programs for youth in the rural communities.

The Rural Community Organizing Project has developed a functioning Project Board, comprised of a majority of low-income residents of the rural counties, and which meets on a monthly basis. The Project Board is concerned with Leadership Recruitment and Training, Membership, Organizational Development, and Financial stability. During April, 2007, the Rural Organizing Project sponsored a three day intensive leadership training in Lubbock, along with the West Texas Organizing Strategy (WTOS). About 40 people took part, and these participants came away with a better understanding of community organizing, as well as more skills to take back to their constituents.

The primary funding sources for this Project over its three years of operation have been: the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), the ASC Founda-

tion, the Claretian Social Development Fund, and the Franciscan Sisters of Philadelphia Social Development Fund. Reyes Pequeno, the Community Organizer for the Project, is optimistic about the future of this work. She is a resident of Post, Texas, one of the communities that is becoming more organized now that the Project has taken hold. She sees the potential for more positive change in Post and the other rural towns that now have trained and empowered leaders who are enlisting others in this organizing effort.

Food Pantry *(from Page Two)*

food box contains enough items to feed a household for a week.

The total spent on food out of CFS agency funds during the period from July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007 was \$23,276.05. These figures compare to the prior fiscal year, during which 2,648 individuals and families were helped, and CFS expended \$18,163.06 on food for the pantry. The per person cost for food in 2005/06 was \$6.86, while in 2006/07 it rose to \$7.46.

The only way CFS staff is able to provide a week's supply of food for an average of \$7.46 per person is through the large number of generous donors who share canned and other food from their pantries on a regular basis. Several Lubbock parishes take up a monthly collection of food for CFS, called "Basket 52." Some churches and other organizations take up food collections primarily at the holidays. And CFS benefits from long-time relationships with United Supermarkets, as well as food vendors, who generously give on a regular basis. But more is always needed. Every donated can of fruit or vegetables, every boxed mix, every pound of rice, beans or sugar means agency funds can be stretched further to buy fresh meats, eggs, milk and other perishables.

Your food donations to the pantry enable us to feed more individuals and families. If your church has a "Basket 52" collection, please give generously. If your church does not yet collect food on a regular basis, consider asking your pastor or social concerns committee to begin this.

'Helping Hands' Project Begins

Catholic Family Service recently began a collaborative venture with Lubbock Power and Light (LP&L) called the "Helping Hands" Project. This Project will assist low-income customers of LP&L with their utility bill in cases of family emergency such as illness or the loss of a job. Through our Emergency Assistance Program, caseworkers will screen households who apply for this one-time assistance, following guidelines that CFS uses for other families that it helps with a utility bill. Priority will be given to households that have minor children, or elderly or disabled members, recognizing that many families may be in need, but putting first those who are most vulnerable to extremes of hot or cold. Those who are approved for assistance by CFS will then have their bill paid by LP&L, avoiding an interruption of service due to a cutoff for non-payment.

The "Helping Hands" Project relies on the generosity of LP&L customers, who

may elect to donate an additional \$1, \$2, \$5 or more when they pay their monthly utility bill toward this Project. Any amount donated is kept in a reserve fund to be used on a monthly basis by Catholic Family Service to help families in special need of assistance. At this time, in order to participate in the program, if you are an LP&L customer, you may do so by calling Customer Service at: 775-2509. Simply give them your account information and tell them you would like to participate in the "Helping Hands" Project. As this Project becomes more widely known, it is hoped that a check off box will be provided on LP&L bills to expedite customers' being able to contribute to this fund. As the fund grows, CFS Emergency Assistance staff will be able to help more families who are having financial problems and need the extra help this Project provides.

Please call Virginia Alamanza at CFS if you have any questions about this new venture.

Other Program Updates

Resale Center: The Resale Center continues to help many families with quality clothing, furniture and household items. During the first six months of 2007, 264

low-income families were helped with \$22,663 worth of donated items. Almost all of those assisted are first screened by an Emergency Assistance caseworker at CFS, and oftentimes are also helped with food, medication, rent or a utility bill. When an individual or family needs clothing, they are given a gift card to the Resale Center that allows them to shop like any other customer. The amount of the gift card is based on the number of people needing clothing, if children's clothing is needed, and on special circumstances. To schedule a pickup of donated items, please call the Resale Center at 763-8315. You may also want to visit our web page at: www.cfslubbock.org, which contains much updated information on the Resale Center.

Legalization/Immigration: CFS has hired a new Legalization Outreach Coordinator, Hector Hernandez, and he has been a whirlwind of activity since he started. Prior to coming to CFS, Hector had worked as a professor at Texas Tech University, and has brought a passion to his new work with immigrants. Hector has made multiple visits to the sites where CFS has been working for

a number of years in helping immigrants understand their rights and begin or continue their legalization process. This Project covers a large swath of the South Plains and Panhandle of Texas, including

Midland-Odessa, Amarillo, Plainview, Cactus and Friona. Hector is learning much from the Legalization staff at CFS, and has really become immersed in his "on the job training."

Thanks to All Who Supported 'A Night To Remember XVI'

Catholic Family Service held its annual major fundraiser on June 3, 2007, at the Catholic Renewal Center in Lubbock. This year's event drew a large crowd, and the bidding at both silent and live auctions was quite active, helping to make the event a most successful one for CFS. Forty two sponsors (at the \$500 donation level) helped to underwrite the evening, and as always, the drawing for the grand prize valued at \$10,000 garnered a lot of excitement. *A Night to Remember XVI* earned \$63,976.69 (after all bills were paid) for Catholic Family Service, which was an increase of approximately \$8,000 over 2006. All of the proceeds from this fundraiser are used to support the various programs and services of CFS.

The Board and Staff of CFS would like to thank all of our generous donors who

support us through *A Night to Remember*. Your generosity each year makes the work that we do on behalf of the poor possible.

A special thanks goes to the planning committee for the event, who worked steadily for several months to coordinate an evening that was most enjoyable for all in attendance. Our thanks also to Bishop Placido Rodriguez and the diocesan priests who support Catholic Family Service through this fundraiser, and to our faithful auctioneer, Dr. John Ward, who has conducted a lively and personable auction every year that the event has been held.

Please mark your calendars now for *A Night to Remember XVII*, which will be held on Sunday, June 1, 2008, at the Catholic Renewal Center.

**CATHOLIC
FAMILY** 
SERVICE INC.

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