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A photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a light blue floral top, smiling and holding a young child. The child is wearing a dark green patterned shirt. They are outdoors in a lush, green environment with other people in the background. The text 'HELPING ONE AND ALL TO WHOLENESS:' is overlaid in large white letters across the center of the image.

HELPING ONE AND ALL TO WHOLENESS:

CATHOLIC CHARITIES AGENCIES IN THE U.S. TERRITORIES

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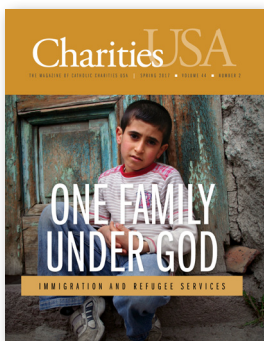
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EDITOR'S

COLUMN

In preparation for this issue, I had the privilege of speaking on the phone with each of the directors of the Catholic Charities agencies that operate on the five populated U.S. territories (See articles beginning on p. 12). Given that the Church is remembering this year the fiftieth anniversary of *Populorum Progressio* – Pope Paul VI's encyclical on integral human development – the idea was to consider the agencies' ministry and service in light of the encyclical.

Two things became very clear in the conversations I had. The first is that each agency is unique: each one is engaged with a population that has a distinct cultural background, or mix of backgrounds; a rich diversity of people; and different challenges and opportunities. The other item that stood out clearly is that all the agencies are dedicated to honoring the dignity of each human being with whom they interact.

The programs and services that the agencies provide are delivered according to the same fundamental understanding of full human development articulated by Pope Francis in his remarks honoring the fiftieth anniversary of *Populorum Progressio*: that is, the focus is on the human person, which means “*relation*, not individualism; it affirms *inclusion* not exclusion; *unique and inviolable dignity* rather than exploitation; *freedom* not coercion” (Emphasis in the original; Pope Francis, “Address to Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development 2017”).

My sense from the conversations was that the directors, while they would welcome more resources and the ability to hire more staff in order to serve the people better, they felt privileged to be in a position that makes a positive difference in people's lives. They are, indeed, anticipating the Kingdom of God. ■

David Werning, Managing Editor

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“No one is permitted to disregard the plight of [one’s sisters and brothers] living in dire poverty...and tormented by insecurity. The Christian, moved by this sad state of affairs, should echo the words of Christ: ‘I have compassion on the crowd.’”

– Populorum Progressio, No. 74



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

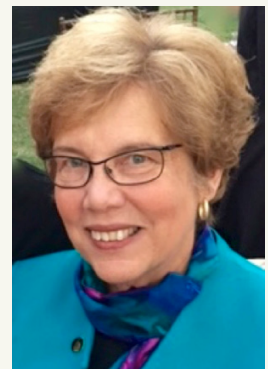
When we think about Catholic Charities we do not often think about the reach of our ministry across the ocean to our U.S. Territories. Despite the distance of these agencies, their dedicated work on behalf of vulnerable people transcends geography and attests to the far-reaching and warm embrace of God for those who live on the margins of society.

I am especially cognizant that this is the 50th anniversary of Blessed Pope Paul VI's encyclical, *Populorum Progressio*. In that encyclical, the pope wrote, "No one is permitted to disregard the plight of [one's sisters and brothers] living in dire poverty..., tormented by insecurity. The Christian, moved by this sad state of affairs, should echo the words of Christ: 'I have compassion on the crowd.'" (No. 74)

You will read in this issue examples of this compassion in action as you learn about the work of five CCUSA member agencies located in the Territories. These agencies are profoundly committed to the integral development of the clients and communities in which they serve. They witness to the transforming love of God that continually invites us to change our world for the better so that all may thrive.



Sister Donna Markham OP, PhD
President & CEO







50 YEARS ON:

HOW *POPULORUM PROGRESSIO* SPEAKS TO THE NATIONAL MINISTRY OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES

By Father Mark Pranaitis, Special Assistant to the President, CCUSA

On Easter Sunday 1967 Pope (now Blessed) Paul VI promulgated *Populorum Progressio*, an encyclical that added substantially to the growing body of work known as Catholic Social Teaching. This fiftieth anniversary year has theologians and others reading the encyclical with new eyes, and the renewed attention reveals the progressive and visionary perspective of Pope Paul VI.

In *Populorum Progressio* the pope invites all people of good will (the encyclical uses the universal form “men,” meaning all men and women) to help foster what we now call “integral human development,” by which he means not merely an improved economic situation for the person or the community, but also a holistic growth that is respectful of the multi-dimensionality of the human person and society. Pope Paul VI understood what can happen when people attend to others holistically; when health and education and employment and families and neighborhoods and society itself are oriented towards the development of all peoples. From the perspective of charity, of service to our neighbor, this is far beyond the idea of “teaching people to fish rather than giving them a fish.” Instead, Pope Paul VI envisions a world in which cooperation between and among people transforms everyone involved, allowing each person to live in the full dignity due to every human being.



Before reviewing the document and sharing thoughts on how it can help enliven the national ministry of Catholic Charities today, a bit of history may be helpful.

From 1922 through 1954 Father Giovanni Montini (later named cardinal archbishop of Milan and later still Pope Paul VI) served as the Vatican's Secretary of State. As such he was engaged in "matters of state" during the years when fascism was on the rise, when Hitler and Mussolini were in power, during World War II and its aftermath. While Secretary of State, he traveled extensively and saw real human suffering.

Father Montini was also fully engaged in the service of refugees and displaced persons during the war. Thanks to Montini, Castel Gondolfo, the pope's summer retreat, was opened to refugees during and after the war. He was actively engaged in the rebuilding of Europe and worked tirelessly with representatives of the Church in South, Central and North America (including our own Msgr. John O'Grady, leader of the national Catholic Charities ministry from 1920 to 1961) facilitating the resettlement of tens of thousands of people in the Americas.

With all this experience, it is not surprising that Paul VI wrote *Populorum Progressio* as a clear, full-throated call to transformation and action. The pope wanted to "awaken in the People of God full awareness of their mission today. In this way they can further

the progress of poorer nations and international social justice, as well as help less developed nations to contribute to their own development." If this sounds like it came from the documents of the Second Vatican Council, readers will do well to remember that Vatican II documents were promulgated by Pope Paul VI as well.

Again, what the pope envisions in *Populorum Progressio* is much more than economic development. While that is good, it is insufficient. Rather, "...authentic [development] must be well rounded; it must foster the development of each man and of the whole man." There will be no separating economics from "human realities, nor development from the civilization in which it takes place. What counts for us is man—each individual man, each human group, and humanity as a whole."

For those familiar with the history of Catholic Charities, the pope's focus on holistic development may not sound very new. The National Conference of Catholic Charities – which became Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) – sounded the same concern at its September 1910 gathering, at which some 400 delegates were present:

We found our leaders as thoroughly convinced of the incomplete and unsatisfactory character of mere relief work as could be asked. We found them speaking from the integrity of the family and of the home in tones that could not be mis-

“Yet even when the lofty goals of ‘refinement and culture’ have been attained, Pope Paul VI envisions more when he says that it’s not enough for people to have come this far only to now be greedy protectors of what they have.” – Father Mark Pranaitis

understood. We heard the Superior of an Infant Asylum advocate the home for the orphan quite as vigorously as the most advanced of our often mistaken critics. We found the delegates as eager for social and preventative work as any reasonably careful student of human history and of institutions could ask. Even where fault was found the fault itself had with it the hope of progress.

While the NCCC met 57 years prior to the promulgation of *Populorum Progressio*, these early ministers of charity already realized that “mere relief” was not sufficient; charitable service also needed to seek wholeness for the person, the family, and the community. From its earliest days Catholic Charities anticipated a future as hopeful as the one envisioned in *Populorum Progressio*, one in which all people participate in “authentic development” and in which people move from “less than human conditions to truly human ones.” The pope describes truly human conditions as including the “rise from poverty to the acquisition of life’s necessities; the elimination of social ills; broadening the horizons of knowledge; and acquiring refinement and culture.”

Yet even when the lofty goals of “refinement and culture” have been attained, Pope Paul VI envisions more when he says that it’s not enough for people to have come this far (out of poverty) only to now be greedy protectors of what they have. Rather, he calls everyone (those raised out of poverty and those never in poverty) to

cultivate “a taste for the spirit of poverty, an active interest in the common good, and a desire for peace.”

Throughout the encyclical the pope holds in tension the Christian vision of a fully developed humanity and the rights of nations to make decisions for their peoples. There is the responsibility to develop the individual person (with his or her cooperation of course), but each person must also contribute to the development of all: “Each [person] is also a member of society; hence he [or she] belongs to the community of man. It is not just certain individuals but all [people] who are called to further the development of human society as a whole” (No. 17). Hence, there is a universality, an inclusion, a bond that undergirds the document and gives it energy and hope.

In one section, “Nobility of Work,” the pope writes about how work has the capacity to ennoble all workers, a concept that applies to those who, like the staff members of Catholic Charities, work to help change things for people who suffer the effects of poverty. (Again, please forgive the dated language.)

The concept of work can turn into an exaggerated mystique. Yet, for all that, it is something willed and approved by God. Fashioned in the image of his Creator, “man must cooperate with Him in completing the work of creation and engraving on the earth the spiritual imprint which he himself has re-



“Man must meet man, nation must meet nation, as brothers and sisters, as children of God.”
In this world, “the needy Lazarus can sit down with the rich man at the same banquet table.”

– *Populorum Progressio*, Nos. 43, 47



ceived. God gave man intelligence, sensitivity and the power of thought—tools with which to finish and perfect the work He began. Every worker is, to some extent, a creator—be he an artist, craftsman, executive, laborer or farmer.

Bent over a material that resists his efforts, the worker leaves his imprint on it, at the same time developing his own powers of persistence, inventiveness and concentration. Further, when work is done in common—when hope, hardship, ambition and joy are shared—it brings together and firmly unites the wills, minds and hearts of men. In its accomplishment, men find themselves to be brothers.

The work of Catholic Charities, of caring for those in poverty, can be “turned into an exaggerated mystique.” Even if those who do it are sober and realistic about it, to many people, this work is a marvel. Surely this work is effective only when it is done in cooperation with God in the spirit of “completing the work of creation” and “engraving on the earth the spiritual imprint. . .[we have] received.” Catholic Charities staff members bring to their work “intelligence, sensitivity and the power of thought” in an effort to change the lives of people and the systems that keep them impoverished. It takes, in the words of the pope, “persistence, inventiveness and concentration” to do this. Since the work is done in common (within programs, within agencies, and across the whole national ministry) “hope[s], hardship[s], ambition[s] and joy[s] are shared” resulting in a unity of “will, minds and hearts.”

The unity of all people is the goal towards which the pope directs the reader's vision. He sees unity as evidence of “the establishment of a supernatural order here on earth.” This “supernatural order” will be characterized in many ways including reduced “in-equities,” the elimination of “discrimination” and freedom from the “bonds of servitude.”

In this supernatural order people will live a “full-bodied humanism. . .the fulfillment of the whole man and of every man.” This fulfillment will be “open to the values and the spirit and to God who is their source.” In order for this to be accomplished, “Man must meet man, nation must meet nation, as brothers and sisters, as children of God.” In this world, “the needy Lazarus can sit down with the rich man at the same banquet table.”

What will it take for this to come about? “On the part of the rich man, it calls for great generosity, willing sacrifice and diligent effort.” Wealthy nations, as well, must cease to be “jealous of their own advantage alone” and stop “sacrificing the pursuit of excellence to the acquisition of possessions.”

CCUSA rightly focuses its efforts on the needs of people in the United States and its territories. It also is part of *Caritas Internationalis* (mentioned in the encyclical). May these united efforts toward integral human development result in a world like the one envisioned by Pope Blessed Paul VI. ■

“CCUSA rightly focuses its efforts on the needs of people in the United States and its territories. May these united efforts toward integral human development result in a world like the one envisioned by Pope Blessed Paul VI.” — Father Mark Pranaitis



HELPING ONE AND ALL TO WHOLENESS:

CATHOLIC CHARITIES AGENCIES IN THE U.S. TERRITORIES

By David Werning, Managing Editor



INTRODUCTION

In light of the fiftieth anniversary of Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, which focuses on the need for integral human development for all men and women, and for the human community as a whole, *Charities USA* asked the five Catholic Charities agencies that are located in the five populated territories of the United States to discuss their overall ministry and their efforts at integral human development.

The agencies and their corresponding territories are these: Catholic Social Services, Pago Pago in American Samoa; Catholic Social Services in Guam; Karidat Social Services in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands; Caritas de Puerto Rico; and Catholic Charities of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Each of the agencies shares the fundamental concern of the Catholic Church articulated in *Populorum Progressio*: to seek on behalf of the people they serve “a larger share in the benefits of civilization and a more active improvement of their human qualities.” (No. 1).

Before turning to the agencies, however, the reader may benefit from a reminder concerning the status of U.S. territories in which the Catholic Charities ministry operates. Generally speaking, the U.S. Constitution states that the power of the U.S. to acquire new land and to define the relationship with the inhabitants (if any) belongs to the Congress (See Article IV, Section 3, Clause 1). The five territories listed here are all unincorporated, meaning they do not enjoy a permanent bond with the U.S. (although that could change). They are also all either organized or self-governing, which means they have a system of government approved by the U.S. Inhabitants of these territories enjoy basic human rights under the Constitution, but they cannot vote in federal elections. Residents of American Samoa are U.S. Nationals and not U.S. citizens as are the residents of the other four territories. Both Puerto Rico and the Northern Marianas Islands have a further identification as a commonwealth, which gives them a legal status in between a territory and a state.

The relationship between four of the territories and the United States began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Guam and Puerto Rico became U.S. territories in 1898 through the Treaty of Paris that ended the Spanish-American War. American Samoa became a United States possession as a result of the Tripartite Convention of 1899, which divided Samoa between Germany (western islands) and America (eastern islands). The U.S. Virgin Islands were purchased by the U.S. from Denmark in 1916 for \$25 million in gold. The Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands became the newest U.S. territory on November 4, 1986.

The Catholic Charities agencies that minister on the five islands experience both benefits and challenges due to their relationships with the corresponding U.S. territories. The benefits include the availability of federal funding, which, alternatively, can also be one of the challenges, especially when the territories get lost amid the appropriations for the fifty states. Another major challenge can be protecting the cultural heritage of the people while at the same time helping them to adapt to the modern world. The motivation, however, remains the same: helping individuals and communities reach their full potential. Pope Francis said, “Ultimately, true development is measured by concern for human beings, who are the heart of all development: concern for their education, health, and dignity” (“Address to Government Authorities and the Diplomatic Corps,” Cairo, Egypt, April 28, 2017). As the reader will see in the following articles, the staff and volunteers of these five Catholic Charities agencies are committed to the integral development of the people they serve and they fulfill their ministry with grace and dedication. ■



CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

PAGO PAGO

Sulita Smith, executive director of Catholic Social Services, Pago Pago (CSSPP) in American Samoa, came to lead the Catholic Charities agency in an exceptional way. Here is her description:

“On Saturday, June 28, 2014, while praying in front of the Blessed Sacrament, I asked the Lord if he wanted me to do anything. I told him that I would do anything and go anywhere he wants. The next day was Sunday, June 29, the feast day of St. Peter and St. Paul, and my daughter and I traveled to visit my four brothers, all of whom lived in American Samoa. On the third day after praying, my daughter and I were in American Samoa saying hello to Bishop Peter Brown [Diocese of Samoa-Pago Pago]. That’s when he asked if I would come and help CSSPP. I declined because I was afraid, and I totally forgot what I said in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Three days later my brother died and that’s when I recalled my prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament. I realized that when God calls us we drop everything and go and do not be afraid. Just like he called my brother from this life.”

What Sulita found upon becoming executive director of CSSPP was an office, a lot of files, and one staff person who maintained the

front desk. “I was basically on my own,” Sulita said. Reading through the files and getting to know the people, she discovered quickly that the two most enduring problems afflicting the community (for more than a decade) were alcoholism among the older folk and drug involvement by the youth (including both selling and using). These two issues remain the reasons most clients are referred to CSSPP by the local government. Helping these people occupies most of Sulita’s time, as well as the time of the few staff she has been able to hire.

Sulita’s approach to the service that CSSPP provides is rooted in her deep faith and her concern for others. Although she does not refer to the concept of “integral human development” in her workaday vocabulary, it is nonetheless part and parcel of her practice. She finds inspiration in the words of Blessed Paul VI who, in his encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, encourages everyone – individuals, communities, churches and governments – to achieve a well-rounded and authentic development of each human person and society as a whole (Nos. 14-17). This means respecting the inherent dignity of the human person and working persistently to bring that dignity to fullness, which includes access to life’s necessities, education,



▶ CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
PAGO PAGO



Leadership: Bishop Peter H. Brown C.Ss.R; Sulita Smith, Executive Director

Major services: Primary Level. 1. Violence Against Women’s Act (VAWA) sub-grantee through the Criminal Justice Planning Agency from Office of Violence against Women (OVW). Services: Victim Services, Education, Public Awareness, Batterer counseling. Referral based on client’s need/s. 2. Basic Center Program for homeless and run away at-risk youth, sub-grantee through Pacific Youth & Community Development Organization (PYCD) 3. Court Referrals, anger management counseling, drug and alcohol counseling.

Basic history: In 1987, after installation of the first bishop, Bishop John Quinn Weitzel, a commission for Justice and Peace was established. In August 1990, the in August Diocesan Synod Commission on Social Concern and Development recommended that a ‘Catholic Social Services’ office be set up in the diocese to deal with drug and alcohol-related problems. This recommendation was accepted and ratified by the Synod. In September 1993 Bishop Quinn Weitzel arranged for a full time qualified staff person to work with the commission to set up CSSPP. By-Laws were adapted, and Board of Trustees was formed in 1994. The office of CSSPP evolved and developed its initial structure under the leadership of Sr. Mary Naab of the MaryKnoll Sisters. Since opening, CSSPP has served more than one thousand families.

GPS location: Latitude S 14° 19’ 52.039” Longitude W 170° 43’ 59.901”



religion and culture. It is important to note that this development does not strive for a uniform human race, but respects the diversity of cultures among the human family.

The principles articulated in *Populorum Progressio* can be seen in CSSPP's care for people. "When someone walks into our office, yes, we see the individual, but we don't just receive him or her; we receive the whole family. This is part of our culture: that the whole family is represented by the individual. It's almost like the teaching of our Catholic Church about the mystical body of Christ," Sulita said. Her statement, offered spontaneously in response to a question about CSSPP's mission, contains all the elements of a program of service: respect for the individual, recognition of the familial connection, and the importance of culture and faith. The goal is to take care of the whole person and avoid the mistake of simply attending to problems on the surface. Professional services are important in helping people, services like case management, needs assessment, treatment programs and, for some, a safe place to live. However, Sulita is convinced that, in addition to these, CSSPP has to get "down to the core" of the problems: broken relationships.

"In our culture there is a thing called 'sacred space,' and I am very much bringing that back in response to the problems here. We call it 'va tapu'ia.' 'Va' means space; 'tapu' means sacred; and 'ia' means so be it. The first sacred space is between the person and the creator. The second is the relationship of the person and the land (and all living things). The third 'va' is between the person and the other. The fourth is between the person and his or her own spirit." When these relationships are not honored, both the individual and the community suffer.

When Sulita meets with people, either those referred to CSSPP by the courts or those who come on their own, she tells them that "they

have the answer within them." If a person remembers who he or she is in relation to God and other people, then the other services provided by CSSPP will help the person move toward greater integration. Sulita urges her clients: "Remember who you are and that you are more than a part of your family; you are an 'organ.' The whole family is one body, you cannot separate one from the other. If one member is in trouble, the whole family feels it." Sulita has found that remembering relationships can free a person from self-absorption and open the individual to positive changes that lead to personal and communal healing. The teaching, of course, is not only Samoan but also Christian, as St. Paul told the Corinthians 2,000 years ago: "If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy" (1 Cor 12:26).

Sulita's approach also corresponds to the teaching in *Populorum Progressio*, which recommends two avenues toward authentic human development. The first is personal responsibility: "Endowed with intellect and free will, each [person] is responsible for his [or her] self-fulfillment..." (No. 15). At the same time, each person is also a member of society, "hence he belongs to the community of [mankind]. It is not just certain individuals but all men [and women] who are called to further the development of human society as a whole" (No. 17).

"We need to be able to be who we are," Sulita said. And that means acknowledging the fundamental relationship with God and with each other. Thus grounded, men and women are able to look forward to their eternal destiny and to anticipate it through the development of "each individual [human being], each human group, and humanity as a whole" (*Populorum Progressio*, No. 14). ■



CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICE

GUAM

Diana Calvo, executive director of Catholic Social Service Guam (CSS), keeps in mind a compliment she has heard often from clients: “the only one who was able to help us is CSS.” These words reflect what might be called an unofficial mission statement; “we can’t be the one to turn people away,” Diana said. Other organizations on Guam are serving people too, but they tend to operate within the confines of their particular roles. On the other hand, CSS models itself after the example and message of Jesus, which means CSS staff are dedicated to helping individuals reach their full human potential. Sometimes a service area or program does not fit the need of a person so “we risk doing something different,” Diana said. “CSS has always overextended itself, so we are a little bit more organized in our ‘over-extensions.’”

The vision of CSS is right in line with Pope Paul VI’s call in *Populorum Progressio* for an integral human development, which insists on the need for professional expertise in coming to the aid of both individuals and communities. However, the pope also wrote that such aid will be less effective (possibly even rejected) if not motivated by

genuine love (See Nos. 71, 72, 75, 86). CSS provides both – professional services and charity – and it does so within a multifaceted island culture with two major influences: the federal government and the Catholic Church.

In terms of professional services, the largest programs managed by CSS are its daycares and in-home services for the elderly and persons with disabilities. The programs have contributed to a higher quality of life for both groups of people. Additionally, victim services that involve intensive case management, including after care services, have contributed to a greater awareness of community resources, which are accessible to those recovering from trauma giving them greater self-reliance and self-confidence.

Homeless services expend the majority of time for CSS staff. CSS conducted a point-in-time count in January 2017 and found that there were 800 homeless people on Guam, including children and families. The numbers never used to be so high, Diana said, but unemployment, exacerbated by substance abuse, has led to the

increase. The majority of the homeless population are local residents, but migrants from the state of Chuuk in the Federated States of Micronesia make up a significant sub-group. The problem has grown so much that the Guam Homeless Coalition, for which Diana is chairperson, was formed to bring together organizations and people to work toward a solution. The work involves the whole continuum of service, as Diana recounted: “we assist people with emergency housing, obtaining a job, helping them to save money so they can buy a ticket to get back where they came from or to put toward more permanent housing if they are not going to return to their initial place of residence. We spend a lot of time on the homeless issue.”

As CSS keeps busy serving their brothers and sisters, it also has to spend time interacting with the federal government and the Catholic Church, both of which bring their own blessings and challenges.

According to Diana, the relationship between CSS and the federal government is influenced by the relationship between Guam and the United States, which can be frustrating from Guam’s perspective. “As an unincorporated territory of the U.S., Guam’s only importance is its strategic physical location in the Pacific for military purposes,” Diana said.

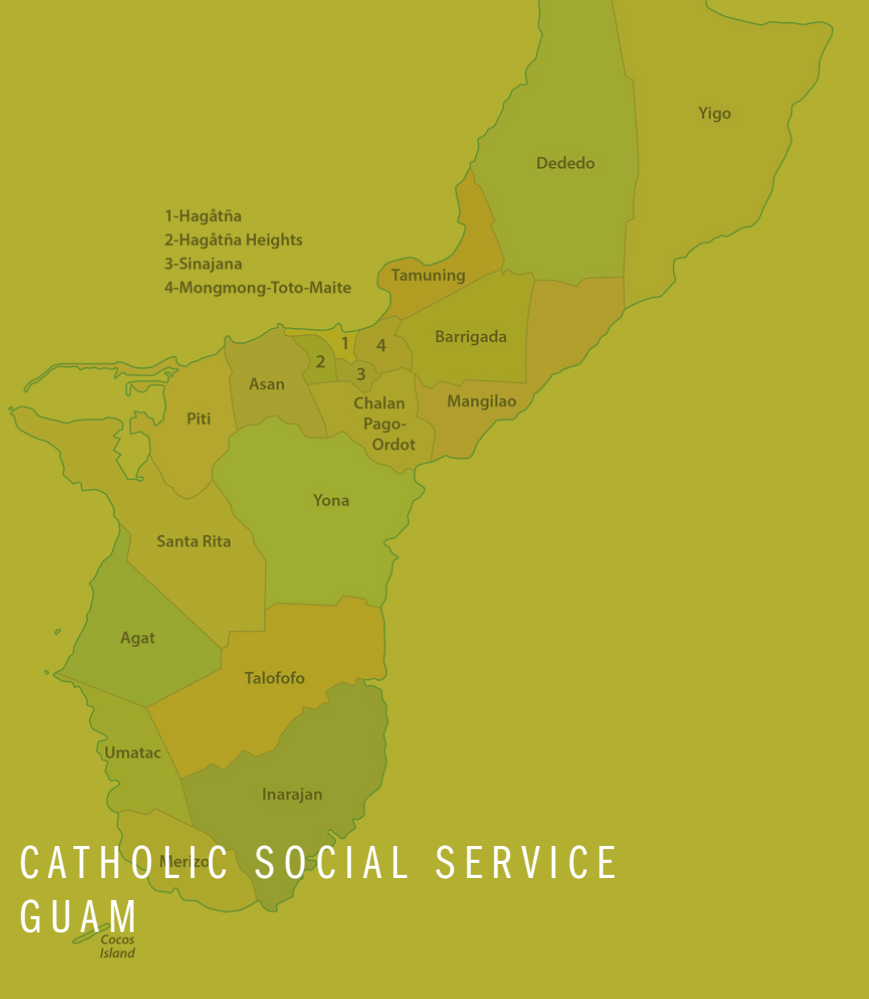
On the one hand, the presence of the military can often contribute to difficulties. For example, a large military population, many of whom are single young men, brings with it undesirable social issues such as drunk driving and assault. The military can also have a harmful impact on the island’s environment, including destroying ancient cultural areas. “Over the years, a lot of the local residents have had negative thoughts about the military coming in and taking over, doing what they wish with the land, with no real regard to the effects that it has on the individuals who live on this island,” Diana said.

On the other hand, having the military on the island can have a positive effect. Diana said that most of the island’s residents would like to see a military build-up, as long as the Department of Defense jobs would be open to local people and the harmful social issues would be mitigated: “If you’re also growing the civilian sector, then that means there will be additional income and more spending money in Guam to grow the economy.”

When it comes to the relationship between CSS and the federal government specifically, Diana thinks that some of the frustrating aspects of the relationship between Guam and the U.S. have crept in. “We are eligible to participate in and apply for the various mandatory and discretionary federal grants, but depending on the type of grant, sometimes territories like us are forgotten.” Diana noted that funding decisions for federal grants often focus on the fifty states. When territories are included, the level of funding has a different formula or calculation, which means that a CSS program may be allocated “a certain percentage of one percent of the total,” according to Diana. “Because the funding formulas are established congressionally, that’s where the changes would have to be made.”

Another important relationship that CSS maintains is with the local Catholic Church. Like the federal government, the Catholic Church has exerted both a negative and positive influence on CSS. Presently the Catholic Church on Guam is in a state of division arising from sexual abuse allegations against its former archbishop, Anthony Apuron, and from a lay group called the Neocatechumenal Way that many local Catholics charge with driving a wedge between parishioners and even family members. The division has resulted in a decrease in charitable donations, which needless to say poisons the overall giving environment. On the positive side, the Catholic faith remains an integral part of many people’s lives and the Catholic schools are a very active group supporting the general population through special drives for on-island and off-island causes. Diana said that the new bishop, Michael Byrnes, “has the great task of reconciling and healing the Church on Guam and re-establishing trust with the parishioners.”

As CSS moves forward, the big question, according to Diana, is this: “Do we expand, which means adding costs and finding new funding streams, or do we begin to streamline and downsize to focus on a particular area?” It’s an important question, but more important is serving people, and that mission is really what is driving any and all discussions about strategic planning. “We have been really thinking outside of the box, just because between government and non-government resources we’re pretty much maxed out, but to help individuals we have to come up with a plan, and we have been looking at plan B’s and plan C’s.” Based on the service it has already provided so well, CSS will no doubt find a way to continue.



▶ CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICE
GUAM
Cocos Island



Leadership: Catholic Social Service Guam is led by Archbishop Michael J. Byrnes, Coadjutor Archbishop of Agaña, as President of CSS and Chairman of the Board of Trustees. CSS is governed by an 11-member Board of Trustees. CSS Executive Director Diana Calvo and Deputy Director Paula Perez oversee the organization of approximately 260 employees. Program Managers oversee respective program operations and staff therein.

Major services: Services provided include adult day care services, in-home services, case management, residential group homes, protective shelters for child victims of abuse/neglect, domestic violence victims, elderly or individuals with disabilities who are victims of abuse/neglect, homeless shelters and affordable housing for low income individuals and families. CSS also operates two food pantries, a thrift store, fingerprinting, and provides emergency disaster assistance.

Basic history: CSS was formally established and incorporated in April 1979 following years of charitable community service in the respective parishes, and more so following the Church's work with Vietnamese refugees who were brought to Guam for immigration processing at the end of the Vietnam War. Concurrently, services outsourced from federally-funded programs administered by the Government of Guam required a legitimately established organization to provide the services. CSS' first service contract was providing a drop-in center for individuals battling substance and alcohol issues. Over the past 38 years, CSS has expanded its services to aging services, disabilities, domestic violence, homelessness and affordable housing in addition to operating a food pantry, thrift store, fingerprinting and financial assistance for off-island treatment of catastrophic medical conditions.

GPS location: Latitude N 13° 29' 27.988" Longitude E 144° 49' 27.851" ■



KARIDAT SOCIAL SERVICES

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

By Claire Seelinger Devey (Claire volunteers for Karidat Social Services by writing grants and working in the Food Bank)

The client's translation app spoke for him since his English was still very limited: "You are more and more beautiful every day!" The message was directed at a staff member, who was then teased by the other staff, but she shrugged it off: "It's just because I speak a little Chinese with him. Even though I'm not very good, it still makes a difference. It warms a person's heart when you try to speak his language."

Here at Karidat, the Catholic Charities agency of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa on the island of Saipan, which is the largest and most populous of the fourteen islands that make up the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) in the Western Pacific, we often have to rely on translation apps in order to communicate with our clients. For a tiny island, which stretches only 12 miles long at its widest, it holds a remarkable diversity of people.

"Karidat" means "charity" in the native Chamorro language and the agency was founded on May 5, 1980, six years before CNMI became an official U.S. territory. Almost 40 years later, the full-time

staff numbers just 14, five at the main office and nine in the field. Nevertheless, Karidat provides an array of services and tries to care for each person who seeks help.

"Even if we cannot do much for someone, we can talk to that person and support them with the tenderness of Christ," says Executive Director Lauri Ogumoro. Karidat aims to practice the essence of integral human development, making the effort to help everyone not only with immediate services but also with strong support on the path to self-fulfillment, which includes the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of the individual and the whole human family (See *Populorum Progressio*, No. 16).

With a total of 10 programs, including emergency food and shelter services, a victim hotline, a shelter for victims of domestic violence, advocacy for victims of various crimes including human smuggling and trafficking, plus disaster relief services in the wake of typhoons or tropical storms, Karidat serves a large number of needs.



KARIDAT SOCIAL SERVICES



Leadership: Lauri Ogumoro, Executive Director; Bishop Ryan Jimenez.

Major services: Karidat has several programs including case management services and a food pantry. The largest program is Guma' Esperansa, a domestic violence shelter primarily for women and families.

Basic history: Karidat was founded by Msgr. Tomas Camacho and a group of interested individuals on May 5, 1980. The agency was originally named the Northern Marianas Catholic Social Services Corporation until April 1991 when it received its present name. The first program implemented by Karidat in 1980 was the Family Services program, which laid a strong foundation for Karidat's services to the community for the past 37 years. In 2013, Karidat became a member of the CCUSA network. In 2014, Lauri received the Bridge of Light award for her work in helping to stop domestic violence. The award is given by the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence and the Family Violence Task Force to a service provider who is actively involved in ending domestic violence in the CNMI and in helping victims.

GPS location: Latitude N 15° 9' 6.655" Longitude E 145° 42' 18.308"

Jeff Bialik, executive director of Catholic Charities San Francisco, and **Gregory Kepferle**, CEO of Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, both board members of Catholic Charities USA, conducted site visits to Karidat Social Services for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (January 23-24, 2017) and Catholic Social Services Guam (January 25-27, 2017).

At each agency discussions were held with senior leadership as well as the local bishop of the Catholic diocese. Visits to agency programs were also part of the agenda, which provided a close look at operations and an opportunity to hear from program managers.

The results of the site visits reveal agencies that are active and vital to their communities. There are both challenges and opportunities to be met by staff of both agencies. Concerning Karidat, three priorities were identified: faith formation, response to urgent social needs, and addressing negative social consequences of economic development. About Catholic Social Services Guam, the priorities for going forward included an analysis of the viability of all programs and the creation of a plan to improve fundraising. ■



You might think that is a lot for 14 staff members to take on, and you would be right. But wait. It gets even more exciting.

Saipan has a population hovering around 50,000 and Karidat operates mostly in English. However, it provides services to people of at least 13 language groups: native Chamorros, Carolinians, Filipinos from various provinces and dialects, Japanese, Korean and Chinese nationals, Russians, Bangladeshis, Thais, not to mention islanders from Palau, Yap, Chuuk, the Marshall Islands and more.

We are proud to have on staff a linguistic savant who just so happens to work the front desk, and she knows six languages and seven dialects. But the ethnic diversity of visitors to our main office has stretched even this polyglot's skills and talents to their limits, and that adds plenty of spice to each workday. It is part of Karidat's mission to treat every single person according to their God-given dignity, and we consider learning a few words or phrases in their language as one way to do that.

The relative proximity of Asia factors into the multi-ethnic character of the CNMI's makeup, along with a long history of colonialism. Before the Marianas islands came to be among the U.S. territories in 1986, the Japanese occupiers were defeated in the famed Battle of Saipan during World War II. By that time, it had been several hundred years since the islands had been free of outside occupiers, the Japanese only having come along after the Germans, who themselves had succeeded over two hundred years of Spanish rule.

It was under the Spanish that Catholicism was instituted as the official faith in the Marianas, which at that time also comprised Guam. Today, with about three quarters of the population identifying as Catholics, the CNMI has 13 parishes. Despite its long faith history, the diocese is classified as a "mission" diocese and an ecclesiastical territory of the Catholic Church in the U.S. In a surprising twist, last summer it was a missionary priest from the Philippines who was Pope Francis' choice to be the new bishop. Faith is central to people's lives here, and it provides a strong foundation for many families.

The majority of Karidat's \$700,000 annual budget is met through federal government grants, with the local government continuing to provide both financial and in-kind support. Yes, that's right: Karidat operates within a budget that is less than three quarters of a million dollars and still manages to cover the cost of all of its expenses. Stretching a dollar is what we do best, and it doesn't hurt that we have a finance officer who is affectionately known as the agency's resident miracle-worker. Without her it would be much harder to respond to the myriad requests for help that show up at the door.

In 2015, that door was almost literally blown off its hinges: On August 2, the eye of Typhoon Soudelor passed over the island of Saipan. For a few hours, there were sustained winds stronger even than Hurricane Katrina's. Many of the island's most vulnerable residents, for whom tin roofs or aluminum siding provide the only protection from the elements, watched as these humble dwellings were



lifted up and flung into the jungle, while the inhabitants huddled to shield themselves from flying debris. The next morning, rich and poor alike woke up to a new world. Power and water remained unavailable throughout most of the island for well over a month; food was scarce and crops and fruit trees were destroyed.

On Karidat's end, the daily volume of people seeking help increased by a factor of more than twenty. There were, of course, the immediate relief efforts of distributing food, water, and hygiene products that were supported by donations from Catholic Charities USA and Catholic Relief Services. But the typhoon brought longer-reaching changes, as well, particularly in housing. The homeless population surged, literally, overnight and the crisis has only grown more severe since the typhoon.

According to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, the Homeless Coalition's most recent point-in-time count in April 2017 places the number of homeless at 647 (a conservative estimate) or 1.29 percent of the overall population.¹ The housing shortage was exacerbated by the high rental assistance rate provided by FEMA after the storm and more recently by foreign investors who are now leasing entire apartment complexes for the newly-arrived employees of the burgeoning casino industry on Saipan.

As if that wasn't enough, the development of the casinos has created an environment in which human trafficking can flourish. Sub-

contractors took advantage of the opportunity to bring in laborers disguised as tourists. Not only did they bypass immigration laws but the unreported workers flew under the radar, providing the perfect cover for wage fraud and other injustices. When the companies were finally caught in the act and the workers lost their jobs, the homeless problem intensified.

Still, the work at Karidat goes on. "We are just here to do the best that we can," says Karidat's Victim Advocate, Cal. This is his mantra, and he repeats the phrase just about every single day. Confronting injustices, poverty or cover-ups are exactly what Karidat was established to do. It is our mission, and not something out of the ordinary.

"Of course sometimes it gets to me" admits Cal, "you know, that we can't do enough or that things are really just so tough for people. But it's good that we are here and I wouldn't want to be doing any other job." ■

¹ New York City leads the nation with a rate of 0.8 percent of its total urban population; the Homeless Coalition's April count puts Saipan's rate well above it, at 1.2 percent.



CARITAS OF

PUERTO RICO

By Father Enrique Camacho, Executive Director (Translated from Spanish by Fani Cruz-Canales)

Puerto Rico has sunk deep into an economic crisis, with a public debt of more than \$70 billion, which has led the country to bankruptcy. This news has caught the attention of the world and has perplexed many who considered Puerto Rico – being a territory of the United States – as a rich country without needs, which has never been true.

Puerto Rico is one of the oldest settlements in the contemporary world, and most Puerto Ricans, of all political ideologies, recognize that it is imperative to solve and define our situation, which keeps us in uncertainty and has created a lot of division and polarization.

The government of Puerto Rico has not been able to create consistent strategies of economic and social growth, but has resorted instead to dependence on foreign aid and loans to solve the lack of funds, a really bad decision for which we are now paying the consequences.

Long before this current situation of economic crisis reached its height, the census figures revealed that 45 percent of our population already lived in conditions of extreme poverty. This is coupled with a working class that has been systematically impoverished by the closure of hundreds of companies, reductions of working hours, and laying off of employees from the governmental and private sectors. It is estimated that at present, 88 percent of our population lives in a precarious situation of scarcity and need.

During my 10 years as director of Caritas of Puerto Rico, I have been able to see first-hand this difficult and painful reality that exists in our country. There are many communities where entire families live in subhuman conditions, in dilapidated housing and without basic services such as electricity and water.

Also, we have experienced in the last few years many clients coming to us for the first time, many of whom are professionals, who come to our doors looking for assistance because they do not have



CARITAS OF PUERTO RICO



Leadership: Fr. Enrique Camacho, Executive Director

Major services: Emergencies and Natural Disasters, Food, Psychological Counseling, Single Mothers and Adolescents at Home Auxiliary, Cuban-Haitian Family Reunification, and Immigrant Aid Anti Human Trafficking Program, Social Work and Community Workshops Integral Human Development, Student Scholarships, Multi-Service Center and Integrated to Aging Our Lady of Lourdes, Campaign for Human and Community Development, Support Institutions to homeless people and cancer patients.

Basic history: Caritas Puerto Rico officially started its operations in 1969 under the name of Catholic Social Services of Puerto Rico. In 2009 it changed its name to Caritas Puerto Rico. At present more than half of Puerto Rico's population is unemployed or disabled. Since 1993 there has been a significant migration off the island. At the same time, the number of senior citizens on the island continues to increase. Each year Caritas Puerto Rico serves 75,000 people. There are 200 parishes in 60 municipalities on the island who work directly on projects, which adds to the support of 600 volunteers, 15 employees and 12 home aides.

GPS location: Latitude 18° 20' 30.841" Longitude 66° 3' 45.195"

enough money to pay for their children's school tuition or because they are going to be evicted from their homes due to delays in their payments.

A study by the Annie E. Casey Foundation found that 84 percent of children in Puerto Rico live in extreme poverty. Twenty university professors conducted a study in 2015 that revealed that Puerto Rico is positioned as the fifth country with the highest social inequality in the world. Data compiled by researchers working on the Human Development Index (HDI) for Puerto Rico show that in 2012, the richest 10 percent in Puerto Rico had 38 percent of the country's total income, while the poorest 10 percent only participated in 2 percent of the total income. Today, the poor in Puerto Rico are 33 times poorer than the richest.

In Puerto Rico, it is not so easy to identify existing poverty since it is found in rural areas or hidden behind vibrant urban centers in its main cities, which boast luxurious buildings and large avenues. However, this extravagance reflects the reality of less than 22 percent of our population. If we travel away from the main avenues, we find a large number of very poor neighborhoods and public housing where thousands of families of very limited resources live.

We see this inequality daily. For example, Puerto Rico is a leader in sales of luxury cars. However, there are tens of thousands of families whose income is not enough to pay their basic utilities and food on a monthly basis. This situation has many very traumatic side effects for the well-being of families. Impoverished and marginalized communities in Puerto Rico suffer not only from the lack of material things, but also from the lack of access to necessary and quality health services, or from maintaining their basic human rights. Many seek alternatives to their difficult situation, through illegal activities and drug dealing, in order to meet the expectations that a materialistic and consumerist society like ours perpetuates. This is really a human tragedy!

With great sadness we have seen entire families arrested for participating in illegal drug sales and trafficking activities, and we suffer a great deal every year when we see the high number of young

people killed in the midst of the wars to control the drug distribution points. In addition, there is rampant domestic and gender violence in our country. The latest epidemiological statistics present more than 500,000 Puerto Ricans suffering from mental illness and four out of 10 of these patients are not receiving treatment for their conditions. This is very worrying if we take into account the alarming increase in suicides, especially in young and middle-aged men.

Another great obstacle for many poor families and communities in Puerto Rico is that our government has lacked an effective model of integral human development. On the contrary, they often marginalize the poor and vulnerable, making them dependent on the minimal assistance that they receive, which is eliminated immediately if they get a better job. Moreover, no transitional period is provided during which people may move toward true financial, human and family stability.

In addition to this, there is an unemployment rate of 16 percent, which has led to the massive emigration of families to the United States and other countries. In the last 10 years more than 500,000 Puerto Ricans have emigrated. As a consequence of this phenomenon, many seniors live alone, in need, and without relatives nearby to help them.


Despite the fact that the present state of affairs is extremely distressing, we estimate that in the upcoming years the situation will become even more aggravated. One reason is the elimination of many federal and local aid programs to the most vulnerable sectors. Also, the exorbitant foreign debt of the Government of Puerto Rico, exacerbated by the many demands of bondholders and the reality of bankruptcy, has caused a significant increase in taxes of all kinds, cuts in retirement pensions, reduction of workdays and benefits for employees, among other detrimental actions which, in effect, will leave those in need even more unprotected and will continue to impoverish the middle and working classes.

Given this picture, it is not difficult to imagine the uncertainty, tension and desperation that is experienced in our country. The Church has been very active and present in the midst of this crisis, ac-

companying and being a voice of justice and solidarity with the most vulnerable. Our Archbishop of San Juan, Monsignor Roberto González, expressed in a summit addressed to the Puerto Rican diaspora of New York in April 2016 that “the reality is that we are regressing in economic, political, social, values of tolerance, in our capacity to give, to live together and we cannot forget that we are beaten by illegal drug trafficking ... Our unity is necessary if we want to progress, and if we want to eliminate the inequalities between us and be able to live together with our different opinions in a spirit of mutual respect, love and mercy.”

In Caritas of Puerto Rico we have been striving to offer hope and love in the face of the pain and difficulties in which we live. That is

why we are constantly adapting our programs to the current reality, which cannot be limited to financial assistance. We have created an accompanying process to provide tools that will advance the integral human development so desperately needed. At present we have created training processes to forge micro-enterprises and provide human, psychological and financial counseling to families. We also have established at present 101 Caritas parishes. Most importantly, we listen to the people and we want to make them feel the human warmth and the merciful embrace of our Lord Jesus Christ. ■



In Caritas of Puerto Rico we have been striving to offer hope and love, in the face of the pain and difficulties in which we live.”

- Father Enrique Camacho



CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

Catholic Charities of the Virgin Islands (CCVI) is like any other Catholic Charities agency in that its *raison d'être* – through programs and services and active charity – is to help people “rise from poverty to the acquisition of life’s necessities,” a goal that requires the efforts of everyone in society according to Pope Paul VI in his encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (or *On the Development of Peoples*; See Nos. 17, 20).

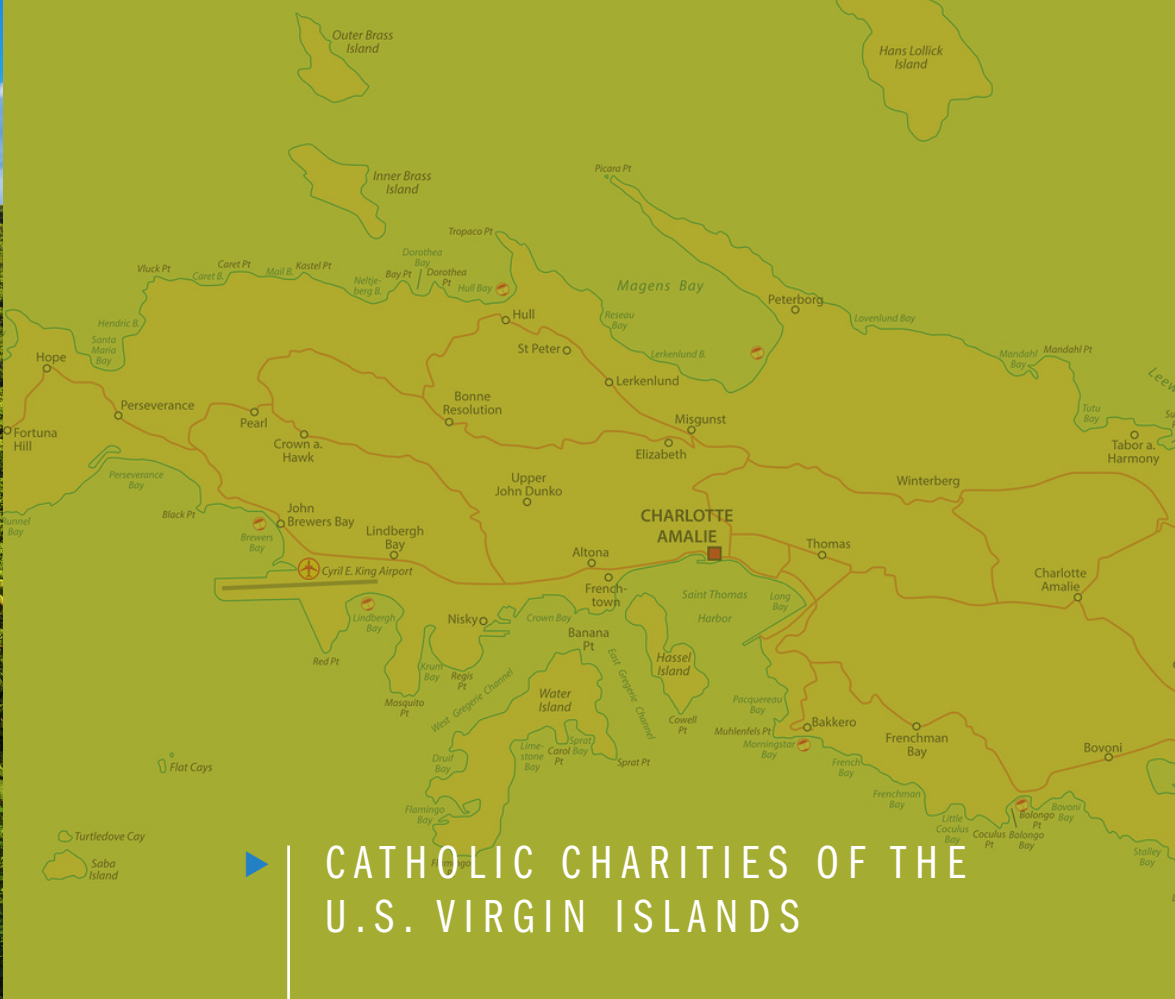
The Virgin Islands include four islands: St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John and Water Island. When it comes to helping the most vulnerable residents, their needs are met by several organizations working together and providing services. The U.S. government, the local government of the Virgin Islands, and the Catholic Church contribute in various ways. The U.S. provides much of the funding for social services, which is passed on through the local government to, among other social service agencies, CCVI. The Catholic Church, in the person of the bishop, Herbert Bevard, provides a governing role.

The relationships with these organizations are positive for the most part, although Andrea did note some frustration with the U.S. government. “They respect the Virgin Islands,” Andrea said, “but we feel

that they sometimes make decisions or policies that will affect us without considering us or our culture.” With the local government, the relationship is much closer: “The islands are small, so everybody knows everybody. I have access to all the senators, and I feel free to ask to speak with the governor too. They all understand the services we provide on the Virgin Islands,” Andrea said.

CCVI operates on all of the islands except for Water Island, which has very few residents and no significant commercial establishments. St. Thomas is the most urban of the islands and hosts the vast majority of tourists, and it is also the home of CCVI’s administrative office. St. Croix is the most agricultural of the islands. Both St. Thomas and St. Croix have homeless shelters, and St. Thomas also has a housing program. On average, each year, CCVI serves between 700 and 800 unduplicated persons. “We find out what the needs are,” Andrea said, “and we answer the needs: financial literacy training, job training, resume preparation, and case management.”

Running a social service agency on multiple islands has its challenges, of course. Funding is a perennial problem. A lot of the support comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban



CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

Leadership: Bishop Herbert Bevard, Diocese of the U.S. Virgin Islands on St. Thomas; Andrea Shillingford, Executive Director. The agency is governed by a Board of Directors with Bishop Bevard being the President and Mr. Richard Bourne- Vanneck, Chairman.

Major services: Homeless shelters on St. Thomas and St. Croix; Street Mobile Outreach on St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John; Soup Kitchens on all three islands; Outreach Service to the mentally ill homeless; Summer Sports Camp for children with intellectual disabilities; Permanent Housing Program; Outreach Services to the homebound elderly.

Basic history: Catholic Charities was founded in 1964 by the ICM Sisters on St. Croix. In 1989, Catholic Social Services, Catholic Charities and Bethlehem House Shelter, through a Merger Agreement became Catholic Charities of the Virgin Islands Inc.

GPS location: Latitude 18° 20' 30.841" Longitude 64° 55' 50.522"



Development's Community Development Block Grant, which is passed through to CCVI by the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority. "Without the Housing Finance Authority," Andrea said, "a lot of our programs would have to close."

Two other challenges affect CCVI in ways that are, perhaps, not experienced by most Catholic Charities agencies: travel and the mix of cultures. Andrea explained the travel challenges: "If I need to work on St. Croix on Thursday, then I have to travel by sea plane and return to St. Thomas in the afternoon. If I work on St. John's, then I use the ferry. All of it involves significant cost."

The cultural issue poses a challenge too, but not in the same way as lack of funding or transportation limits. In fact, it is a positive challenge in the sense articulated by Pope Paul VI in *Populorum Progressio*: if a particular people or community are to be served well, then charity workers need to appreciate their culture (See No. 72). On this point, Andrea noted, the Virgin Islands are unique: "People often ask: are we American or are we Caribbean. Of course we carry U.S. passports and have U.S. birth certificates, but the culture of the Virgin Islands is influenced more by the cultures of other Caribbean islands, from which the migration to the Virgin Islands took place. Islands like Trinidad, Guyana, St. Lucia, Dominica and Grenada. We have a mix of cultures, and that's what makes us different."

The majority of people served by CCVI come from three main groups: Haitians, Spanish people from Santa Domingo, and people from the Down Islands (namely, all the islands south of the Virgin Islands: Antigua, Martinique, Dominica, St. Lucia, Grenada, St. Vincent). Andrea said that serving these brothers and sisters taught CCVI an important lesson: "What we realized is that when we offer

hot meals, non-perishable food items, and clothing, the Haitians will take the clothing, but not the food. Haitians like to prepare their food themselves. The Spanish people tend to be looking more for assistance to pay their utilities and rent. And the people from the Down Islands are looking for whatever they need at the moment. You have to know the difference."

The service CCVI provides extends beyond its own programs. One significant effort was undertaken by CCVI at the request of the local government: the "Home at Last" program. "We were charged with housing 40 people in private apartments and providing them with wrap-around services," Andrea said. The program was very successful, housing 27 individuals. Unfortunately, lack of funding has closed the program temporarily. Nevertheless, some of the landlords agreed to keep a number of the individuals in the apartments because the landlords could see the real difference the housing had on the clients. "We were able to place some in our shelters too, and we are working on getting the program back to where it was," Andrea said.

None of the challenges take away from the rewards that the CCVI staff experience as they serve their fellow islanders. Remembering the privileged position CCVI is in, Andrea shared one of the special moments that make their efforts so worthwhile: "Recently we walked into the utility company's office to deal with some agency issues, and a gentleman, whom we had helped to overcome illiteracy, walked into the office after us. He walked in by himself to pay his bills and he was checking his bills by himself, and I thought to myself, 'Isn't this amazing.'" ■



IN SOLIDARITY- AMERICAN SAMOA

By Kim Burgo, Sr. Director Disaster Operations CCUSA

American Samoa. Brilliant. Beautiful. Rustic. Exotic. Euphonious. Calming.

American Samoa – an island about the size of Washington, D.C. jutting proudly in the South Pacific Ocean; a paradise heralding its existence 2,600 miles west of Hawaii. In 1845, the Marist Fathers arrived as missionaries. In 1900, local village chiefs ceded the island to the United States with 7,000 inhabitants and the U.S. flag was raised. In 1946, the first high school educated students up to the 12th grade, and in 1970 Pope Paul VI arrived as the first pontiff to visit any South Pacific Island. The Catholic Diocese of Samoa Pago Pago was established in 1982 and in 2000 the U.S. Postal Service celebrated the one-hundred-year relationship with American Samoa with the creation of a commemorative stamp.

The Samoan pace of life is relaxed, deliberate, grace-filled and peaceful. Life centers on generations of familial and tribal customs and practices. The dramatic protruding rock structures and mountains leave little convenient living space.

American Samoa

Population	68,000
Unemployment	29.8%
Family Income	\$24,000.00
Poverty	60%



Islanders, for the most part, reside and embrace life along a one to two mile flatland skirt on the island's perimeter. Traffic is non-existent, but the speed limit on the main road is 25 mph.

A day in American Samoa begins at 6 a.m. with the banging of a large, retired propane canister hanging from a village tree. Most islanders hear the sound and embrace it as the morning alarm and a call to visit their place of worship before work. One pauses, thanks God for one's beautiful home and family, and celebrates this prayer with song. Soon, the island is filled with a melodious tone that hangs in the wind until it reaches your soul. Simply paradise. The propane canister rings again at noon, 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. calling villagers to family lunch, dinner, evening prayer, and finally to ensure that everyone is home safely for the night.

September 29, 2009: An 8.0 earthquake occurred off the coast of Chile. As Samoan villagers awoke to the everyday sounds of island life with the 6 a.m. canister call, no one knew that such an event, so very far away, would affect them so personally. Many recall waking that morning and noticing the strange and amazing site: the ocean had noticeably receded and didn't appear to be stopping. Then there was panic. Village chiefs soon realized receding waters were the warning sign that a tsunami was about to arrive upon them. After frantically banging on the propane canisters, the islanders ran for the mountains since they had minimal access to safe shelters. By 6:48 a.m., the devastating tsunami, with waves as high as 20-30 feet, took landfall on their island paradise.

The tsunami, as it affected other South Pacific islands as well, claimed more than 200 lives. In American Samoa, 22 people perished and 49 percent of all homes were damaged or destroyed. The two primary industries, tuna production and cruise ship tourism, were instantly obliterated. Disbelief, astonishment, and shock

quickly permeated every moment. A federal declaration was granted, and in the end, FEMA provided more than \$300 million in federal funding.

Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Samoa Pago Pago (CSSPP) knew instantly that, with their staff of three persons (including the director) and an annual budget of \$38,000.00, their role would be critical in any immediate response and long term recovery efforts. With this in mind, the (retired) director Cecilia Salofa contacted the CCUSA Disaster Response Team and immediately requested that they deploy to the island.

With only two flights in and out of American Samoa a week, the CCUSA Disaster Team still managed to arrive in a few days following the horrific event. Despite the sadness of losing loved ones, and the confusion that occurs when disasters of this magnitude happen, the CCUSA team was warmly greeted by staff and villagers alike.

"There can be no progress towards the complete development of individuals without the simultaneous development of all humanity in the spirit of solidarity." (Populorum Progressio, No. 43)

Together the two teams went to work. Making connections with national partners – both on the ground and on the mainland – CSSPP was able to embrace its local relationships to quickly establish six distribution sites throughout the island and, with the help of volunteers, provide food, clean water, and immediate case work for affected disaster survivors. Additionally CSSPP took it upon themselves to open their retreat center housing to disaster teams from the American Red Cross, Save the Children Federation, FEMA and CCUSA.

“Catholic Social Services embraced their responsibility of advocating for the many issues that arose; such as (non-existent) temporary housing, access to resources for the elderly and disabled, and access to clean water.” – Kim Burgo

While CSSPP took a strong lead in resource provision, each established site became the outlet whereby other organizations channeled their supplies as well. CSSPP embraced their responsibility of advocating for the many issues that arose, such as (non-existent) temporary housing, access to resources for the elderly and disabled, and access to clean water.

Clean water on an island affected by a tsunami is a problem made worse when there is no access to supplies. Supplies can be trucked to a mainland disaster site, but an island must be self-sufficient. In American Samoa, supplies arrived only once a week. While clean water systems were being located, FEMA and the American Red Cross accessed more than 1 million bottles of water. CCUSA, for its part, was responsible for bringing in a quarter of a million bottles of water donated by a U.S. water bottling company. Thus, the immediate need for clean water was quickly addressed.

It took some time for clean water desalination systems to arrive, and in the meantime additional bottled water supplies continued to provide a temporary solution. It didn't take long for CSSPP and CCUSA staff to recognize that millions of empty water bottles on an island with no recycling program, or access to a recycling system, would soon be a second disaster both for residents and for the environment.

***“...to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”
Pope Francis (Laudato Si, No. 49)***

CSSPP and CCUSA saw the empty water bottle crisis as an opportunity to fulfill our call to maintain a Care for Creation. Thus a partnership was soon formed with a national partner – Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, an organization that shares a similar Care for Creation

teaching. Together, we formed a partnership that provided a small stipend to islanders willing to collect the empty bottles. The bottles were organized, bundled, and shipped to the Tzu Chi facility in Taiwan where they were processed and recycled. The recycled bottles were sorted, cleaned, shredded, and spun into thread. Then, working with local Samoan women's organizations, the thread of recycled bottles was spun into fabric and shipped back to American Samoa. The empty water bottles returned to Samoa as cloth given to women's groups who used it to sew clothing items that they sold locally as a way to provide a small income for families.

With the help of CSSPP, CCUSA, and the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, the American Samoa government approved and implemented the island's first recycling program. Today, the importance of recycling is now taught as part of the K-12 school curriculum.

Following the tsunami, CSSPP received sufficient funding to provide recovery services to hundreds of individuals and families throughout the three-year recovery period. They advocated for the rights of the voiceless, accessed temporary housing, and with other partners left an environmental legacy that will exist long after the effects of the tsunami are forgotten. CSSPP demonstrated that they are, and will continue to be, the catalyst for solidarity, compassion, and change. They are part of what makes American Samoa a paradise once again.

“...development cannot be restricted to economic growth alone. To be authentic, it must be well rounded; it must foster the development of each [person] and of the whole [person].” (Populorum Progressio, No. 14) ■

THE 2017 CCUSA VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNER



Mrs. Estelle Anderson has been chosen as the 2017 CCUSA Volunteer of the Year for her generous gifts of her time and talent to Catholic Charities of Buffalo. She will be presented the award at CCUSA's Annual Gathering, which takes place in Houston, Texas, September 28-30, 2017.

Buffalo ranks as one of the poorest cities in the nation, but those who encounter Estelle feel richer for knowing her. She truly gives a sense of dignity and hope to those most vulnerable in our community. Using the materials she has been given, Estelle weaves together a beautiful masterpiece of service, compassion and commitment.

When asked what keeps her motivated to continue her service, Estelle has a simple answer: it's just a part of her. She has always looked to the example set by her mother, who was the daughter of slaves and the inspiration of Estelle's service and volunteerism. Her mother, Estelle said, believed in the responsibility of giving back to your community and making it a better place for all.

Estelle started volunteering for Catholic Charities of Buffalo 30 years ago. At that time, she began working in the Ladies of Charity Layette program which provided newborns with clothing that donors would drop into a collection bin. Over the years Estelle enhanced the program so that presently mothers in need are supplied with not only clothing, but also crib linens and diapers for their babies. Estelle also helps to refresh the inventory by organizing numerous baby showers in and around Buffalo. Estelle has aided an estimated 10,000 families through the Layette program, according to Catholic Charities. She also started a bag program eight years ago, through which she and other volunteers provide senior citizens with homemade tote bags that can be used to carry items from Catholic Charities food pantries. Even though Estelle is 95, she shows no signs of slowing down.

In her formative years, Estelle learned that her mother, who attended the historically black Fisk University, had a role in organizing the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Her mother's charitable and giving nature, she said, made a lasting impression on her. Catholic Charities of Buffalo, the local community, and many people are the beneficiaries of that legacy. Estelle is an inspiration to the other volunteers and staff, both young and old, at Ladies of Charity and Catholic Charities of Buffalo, and she is the steady, helping hand for those who come to our door in need.

In addition to her volunteer activities with the Ladies of Charity, Estelle also gives educational lectures on quilting, including in her presentations the social significance of the craft. Most recently, Estelle spent afternoons in February (2017) offering lectures at area churches about the Underground Railroad for Black History Month. She supplemented her talks with references to quilts that contained symbols and signs related to the Underground Railroad.

About the CCUSA National Volunteer of the Year Award

The CCUSA National Volunteer of the Year Award is given to an individual who embodies the mission of CCUSA, provides critical services to those in need, advocates for justice in social structures and calls the entire Church and other people of good will to do the same. Nominations for the award come from Catholic Charities agencies.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES USA AWARDED MORE THAN \$1.1M FOR AMERICORPS PROGRAMS



Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) has been awarded more than \$1.1 million from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) for four AmeriCorps programs for FY2017.

The four programs are: Peer Navigator National Direct Program, Refugee Resettlement National Direct Program, New Americans VISTA Program, and Disaster Resiliency VISTA Program. Through these initiatives, 81 adults will serve at Catholic Charities organizations across the country, combatting poverty through multiple types of intervention.

The Peer Navigation National Direct Program received funding for 20 AmeriCorps members to serve at nine agencies. As direct service AmeriCorps members, these volunteers are veterans or family members of veterans who are serving veterans via trauma informed case management. This type of peer navigation among veterans is found to have great success and it has led to positive outcomes for both the AmeriCorps members and those they serve.

The Refugee Resettlement National Direct Program received funding for 24 AmeriCorps members to serve at 16 agencies. As direct service AmeriCorps members, these volunteers work one-on-one

with refugees, asylees, and trafficking victims, providing specialized trauma informed case management, interpretation services, employment and housing assistance, legal services, and financial literacy education.

The New American VISTA Program received funding for 35 VISTAs and one VISTA leader to serve at 22 agencies. The VISTAs are being utilized for a wide variety of projects, including writing grants, coordinating volunteers, creating training manuals, forming community and organizations partnerships, conducting community education, and creating new sustainable programs. The New Americans VISTAs are all working to transform communities to welcome the stranger and improve the integration and financial self-sufficiency of immigrants and refugees.

The Disaster Resiliency VISTA Program for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Communities received funding for eight VISTAs and one VISTA leader to serve at eight agencies. As VISTAs, these national service members are helping to build capacity in communities with high risk for natural disasters and to provide effective disaster preparedness for populations with LEP.

All four of CCUSA's programs help to implement CNCS's mission to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. For more information on CCUSA's AmeriCorps programs, please contact Sarah Hendley at shendley@catholiccharitiesusa.org. For more information on CNCS and AmeriCorps, visit their website at www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps. ■

Our Lady of Guadalupe Center Opens in Columbus, Ohio



The new Our Lady of Guadalupe Center has officially opened its doors and is ready to serve clients on Columbus' west side. The opening was celebrated with a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house event. Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther, along with other local dignitaries and sponsors, participated in the celebration.

"Our Lady of Guadalupe Center has long provided access to much needed services for our Hispanic community," said Mayor Andrew Ginther. "I am pleased to see the center expand its size and to remain a vital part of the West Side neighborhood."

The Guadalupe Center was originally founded in 1999 as an extension of the programs and local outreach of Catholic Social Services. Operating out of a modest, 1,200 square foot warehouse facility, the Guadalupe Center quickly gained significant recognition as an innovative approach to serving Columbus' Hispanic community. In 2016, the Center served more than 3,500 people and nearly 100,000 meals were provided through its food pantry.

The new facility is located at 409 Industry Drive in a 3,500 square foot facility; nearly triple the size of the former Center.

Programs at the Guadalupe Center focus on four key areas: Economic Development, Health and Nutrition, Family Strengthening, and Community Building. The Center will partner with local busi-

nesses to offer job-mentoring classes, will expand its food pantry, and will offer ESL classes, nutrition classes, and preventative health screenings. The Center also plans to provide case management and increase access to legal services for its clients. The Center's goal is to be a place of welcome and pride, and to serve as an inspiration to the Hispanic community.

"The Guadalupe Center does what Catholic Social Services does best - it helps people reach their potential. The expansion will serve as a trampoline to people who want to build a better life for themselves and their families," says Rachel Lustig, president and CEO of Catholic Social Services, "This new space is the perfect place to welcome our clients and support families on the West Side of Columbus and help them thrive."

Move-in Challenge Donations Help Furnish Rooms for Homeless Moms



Marisol Homes shelter for women and children launched a Move-in Challenge in June, asking the community to transform its new location into a move-in ready home.

As the City of Denver pursues a multi-faceted strategy to address homelessness and affordable housing, Marisol Homes is creating a home environment for expectant mothers and single women with children, who are experiencing homelessness. The 30-day challenge collected donations to fur-

nish 16 bedrooms for single mothers, 86 percent of whom are domestic violence survivors.

"What an amazing opportunity for the children and families," said Amy Eurek, program director for Marisol Homes. "At our new location, more women and their children will have a home to help them rebuild their lives and grow as a family. But we need furniture to make their place welcoming. You can make this move happen by donating so we can get needed furniture."

Construction was completed on a convent-turned-home that includes a large kitchen and dining room, employment and study room, craft area, laundry room and chapel. Move-in for the families started on June 24.

Marisol Homes (formerly Father Ed Judy House) provides stability for women who are experiencing homelessness. The long-term shelter assists the residents as they integrate back into the community, providing support and services to rebuild their lives. At the time of moving out, 76 percent of Marisol families move into stable housing.

The challenge suggested several ways to provide furniture: by donating \$78 to adopt part of a room, \$500 to participate at the Adopt-a-Family level and provide a beginnings kit, or \$6,000 to participate at the Adopt-a-Room level and furnish a complete room.

"Our residents—moms with kids who are in need—could really use your help," Eurek said. "When you transform a room, you transform a life. Let's make this move happen!"

Marisol Homes is a part of Marisol Services, a health, human and social services network for women in need. It operates under Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Denver. Learn more about Marisol Homes and the Move-in Challenge at ccdenver.org/movein. ■



The Bond between Catholic Charities USA and Caritas Internationalis

Sister Donna Markham OP, PhD, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA led a trip to Rome where the CCUSA Board of Trustees met with senior leadership of Caritas Internationalis and Vatican Dicasteries. Pictured here with Sister Donna and the CCUSA Board are Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the new Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development; Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, former Papal Nuncio of the Holy See to the United Nations in Geneva; and Fr. Michael Czerny SJ, Under-Secretary Section for Refugees and Migrants.

On April 25, 2017, the CCUSA Board of Trustees spent a day with Caritas Internationalis (CI) in Rome. Both organizations shared their respective strategic priorities for the next few years, and the dialogue revealed alignment on a number of issues, including the care and concern for migrants and refugees.

The similarities are not surprising given the fact that CCUSA and CI matured together as social service organizations. Monsignor John O’Grady, who was president of CCUSA from 1920 to 1961 (when it was called the National Conference of Catholic Charities), participated in the founding of CI in 1951 in Rome, with the support and encouragement of Archbishop Giovanni Montini, who worked in the Vatican’s Secretariat of State at the time (and later became Pope Paul VI; June 21, 1963–August 6, 1978).

The inspiration that led to the creation of CI was to organize the social services of the Catholic Church worldwide into a federal system composed of national Caritas members. Originally three regions were represented: Europe; Latin America & the Caribbean; and North America, which included CCUSA and Catholic Relief Services (Caritas Canada joined the North American region in 1967). Four other regions became national members of CI at later times: in 1962, Africa and Asia; in 1979, the Middle East & North Africa (combined); and in 1995, Oceania.

CCUSA has always been active in its relationship with CI. For example, each geographical region is represented by a president who sits on the governing board of CI. In North America’s case, the duty is rotated among CCUSA, CRS, and Caritas Canada. Fr. Larry Snyder, former president of CCUSA from 2005 to 2015, was president for

the North American region from 2007 to 2011. The relationship allows for the exchange of information and best practices in much the same way that CCUSA relates to and with its member agencies.

CCUSA and CI see a lot of overlap in their global and local perspectives, which, again, is not surprising since they share the fundamental goal of upholding the dignity of every human person, especially those who are poor and vulnerable. A vivid example nowadays is the great challenge of serving displaced persons, whether their displacement was caused by migration, resettlement (of refugees), or human trafficking. Brutal wars in the Middle East, violent coups in Latin America, and the exploitation of workers in the Pacific Islands have a direct impact on Catholic Charities (or Caritas) ministries from Freiburg to Grand Rapids. The fact that the world is very much a global village now makes the cooperation between CI and CCUSA (as well as other social service organizations) crucial to honoring the dignity of each human person and advancing human development.

Another, perhaps underappreciated, reason for the cooperation and solidarity among charity organizations under the umbrella of CI is the witness it bears to the rest of the world. There is a spiritual bond within the family of Caritas manifested by the prayers and hopes for a better world infused with fraternity, peace, and justice. Indeed the spiritual bond is what motivates all the efforts toward realizing God's love more fully on earth in anticipation of the salvation to be enjoyed in heaven.

The meeting in Rome between CCUSA and CI afforded all the participants an opportunity to appreciate anew their relationship and to share the insights and vision with their respective constituencies. The main focus, however, remains to look forward together on ways to cooperate in bringing charity to all. ■

[This article is based on a phone interview with Kathy Brown, Regional Coordinator of Caritas North America, on June 7, 2017.]

The development of peoples depends, above all, on a recognition that the human race is a single family working together in true communion, not simply a group of subjects who happen to live side by side.

– Pope Benedict XVI (*Caritas in Veritate*, No. 53)



Scenes from the CCUSA's Board of Trustees' trip to Rome.

2017 UPCOMING TRAINING & EVENTS

July 10-11

Partners in Excellence

Oakland, Calif.

Jean Beil

jbeil@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

July 19-20

Tamar's Sisters Group Therapy Training

Alexandria, Va. (CCUSA conference center)

Ramona Ivy

rivy@catholiccharitiesusa.org

July 31–August 1

Partners in Excellence

Flagstaff, Ariz.

Jean Beil

jbeil@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

September 28-30

2017 Annual Gathering

Houston, Texas

Amy Stinger

Events@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

October 23-24

Microbusiness and Matched Savings

Atlanta, Ga.

Jane Stenson

jstenson@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

Matt Zieger

mzieger@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org



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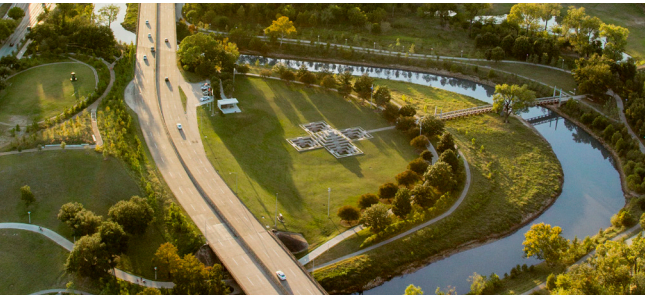


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