

## CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF MICHIGAN IN SERVICE TO HUMANITY

“Believing in the presence of God in our midst, we proclaim the sanctity of human life and the dignity of the person by sharing in the mission of Jesus given to the church. To this end, Catholic Charities works with individuals, families and communities to help them meet their needs, address their issues, eliminate oppression and to build a just and compassionate society.”

*Catholic Charities USA Vision 2000*

**I**n June 2000, a new corporation came into existence in Michigan which will have a significant effect on the way in which Catholic social service agencies across the state deliver services to all of Michigan’s communities. By the action of the diocesan bishops of Michigan, seventeen Catholic agencies are now Catholic Charities of Michigan, Inc.

### Historical Background

This new corporation has its historical beginning in 1956. At that time, Cardinal Edward Mooney and the Bishops of Michigan believed that a uniform, coordinated approach at the state level would bring many benefits to the delivery of services by Catholic agencies. The original organization was incorporated in December of 1956, with its members appointed by the bishops of the then five dioceses of Michigan: Cardinal Edward Mooney, Archdiocese of Detroit; Bishop Allen J. Babcock, Diocese of Grand Rapids; Bishop Joseph H. Albers, Diocese of Lansing; Bishop Thomas L. Noa, Diocese of Marquette; and Bishop Stephen S. Woznicki, Diocese of Saginaw. According to its constitution and by-laws, the purpose of the organization was “to plan, conduct, coordinate, supervise and finance activities which promote the material and moral well-being of the people of the state of Michigan.”

From 1956 to 1963, Catholic Charities of Michigan served its purpose extremely well. When it became evident in 1963 that a statewide approach was necessary for a broader agenda of the Catholic Church’s ministry, Catholic Charities of Michigan was dissolved and the Michigan Catholic Conference was begun. This new MCC agenda addressed education, social action, cemeteries, health care, social welfare, and public policy interests.

Now, three decades later, it is once again necessary for Catholic social service agencies in Michigan to deliver their services as one statewide entity to better meet the needs of the people of Michigan. Catholic Charities has a long tradition of caring for those most in need across our society. Its agencies have long been known to provide a wide variety of services, including mental health counseling, substance abuse rehabilitation, pregnancy support, family reunification, senior citizen programs, financial counseling, and youth/run-away programs.

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Catholic Charities agencies have a long history throughout the country of providing caregiving services to the citizens of their communities, especially those who are most vulnerable. Catholic Charities policy statements ground themselves in official Catholic social teaching from the Vatican and the U.S. Catholic bishops. Catholic Charities USA is the largest private network of independent social service agencies in the United States. In the latest available survey, Catholic Charities agencies across the United States served more than 10.6 million people. Nearly

## **SERVICES PROVIDED BY CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES**

### **Counseling Services**

Individual ~ Pre-Marital  
Marital ~ Group ~ Family  
Mental Health

### **Pregnancy Services**

#### **Foster Care**

#### **Adoption Services**

#### **Substance Abuse Programs**

#### **Refugee/Migrant Services**

#### **Home Heating Assistance**

#### **Emergency Shelter**

#### **Soup Kitchens**

#### **Food Banks & Pantries**

#### **Run-Away Youth Programs**

#### **Social Support**

#### **Foster Grandparents Programs**

seven million people turned to Catholic Charities for emergency assistance in the form of food, shelter, and other crisis services in 1997. Social services such as counseling, respite care, and refugee resettlement were provided to 3.5 million.

In Michigan, likewise, the figures are staggering. In a recent informal survey of Catholic agencies in three dioceses, nearly 100,000 people were served across the state in one year. This included counseling, pregnancy services, adoption, refugee/migrant services, education and family support,

socialization and neighborhood services, food services, emergency/crisis aid, social support services and housing services. Over 700,000 meals were provided to families in need within the three dioceses, Detroit, Grand Rapids and Lansing, where figures were available.

## **Present Environment**

Many changes in the environment in which Catholic social service agencies must function have made it necessary to combine resources into one organization representing agencies across the state. Reductions in state programs and demands for cost reduction have been a constant challenge in health care and social service delivery, and have resulted in the following trends within the state of Michigan.

- ◆ Funding sources and third-party insurers prefer to contract with a limited number of service providers who can deliver services over a broad region. These regions vary according to funding sources and the type of service and frequently may not be consistent with diocesan boundaries.
- ◆ Operational services and information systems to support record keeping, insurance billing, managed care authorization, utilization review, and payroll are becoming more complex and beyond the capabilities of most individual agencies.
- ◆ Mergers and affiliations are already occurring throughout the state to create the economies of scale that will accommodate cost reduction, quality assurance, and service delivery requirements. In numerous Michigan communities, several private non-profit agencies have merged into one large entity which now provides significant competition for the Catholic agencies in those localities. A corporation able to offer services statewide will be able to compete with these large local mergers.
- ◆ Welfare reform and dramatic shifts in public policy have increased agencies' responsibility in strengthening families. Due to increased demands on traditional funding sources such as United Way and Church support, the ability to sustain the current level of outreach and services to the poor is imminently threatened. Catholic Charities of Michigan, Inc. seeks to effectively network with Catholic-sponsored agencies, organizations, parishes, and health care systems to carry out the social mission of the Church in the changing world of today and tomorrow.

Catholic Charities of Michigan, Inc. is blessed with outstanding leadership representing the entire state. The Members of the Corporation are the seven diocesan bishops of Michigan: Cardinal Adam Maida, Archdiocese of Detroit; Bishop Patrick R. Cooney, Diocese of Gaylord; Bishop Robert J. Rose, Diocese of Grand Rapids; Bishop James A. Murray, Diocese of Kalamazoo; Bishop Carl F.

each diocesan bishop. Mr. Roberto M. Javier has been hired as the first Executive Director of the corporation. He will provide the day-to-day program direction for this exciting new approach to providing Catholic social services to all the people of Michigan. .

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Mengeling, Diocese of Lansing; Bishop James H. Garland, Diocese of Marquette; and Bishop Kenneth E. Untener, Diocese of Saginaw. The Board of Directors is comprised of the chief executive officer of each of the eighteen agencies and one representative appointed by

Under this exemplary leadership, Catholic Charities of Michigan, Inc. will strive to serve the people of Michigan by identifying and responding to social problems; improving service delivery; increasing leverage and cost savings; accessing managed care and purchase of service options on a regional or statewide basis; and providing a single point of entry delivery system while working together for a strong Catholic, value-based and mission-driven future.

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The intent of the new Catholic Charities of Michigan, Inc. is articulated well in their vision and mission statements:

### **Vision**

Catholic Charities of Michigan will be an effective and recognized human service organization rooted in Catholic Social Teaching which will strengthen the services of the member agencies

by negotiating contracts on behalf of the member agencies,

by promoting collaborative planning and program activities for the people of Michigan,

by researching the needs of families and ways to address service gaps, and

by advocating just and fair public social policy.

### **Mission**

Catholic Charities of Michigan, drawing upon the rich tradition of Catholic Social Teaching, enhances the emotional, social and spiritual life of individuals and families of Michigan, especially those who are poor and vulnerable.

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## **Catholic Charities of Michigan, Inc. Board of Directors**

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(pending)

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Michigan is one of the first states in the nation in which its agencies are willing to take this revolutionary approach to the delivery of Catholic social services. By becoming one incorporated entity the various agencies across the state will make it possible to continue their valuable participation in the present economic environment. In this way they will renew their commitment to serve the citizens of Michigan, while maintaining their rich tradition of serving those most vulnerable members of our society.

The executive director of Catholic Charities of Michigan, Inc., Mr. Roberto Javier, may be contacted at (734) 971-9781, ext. 451.

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<http://www.micatholicconference.org/> Staff Contact: Sally Whalen

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Telephone: (517) 372-9310 FAX: (517) 372-3940  
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