



CATHOLIC CHARITIES
OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS
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Save The Date

- **11/27 & 28/08**—Offices will be closed for Thanksgiving
- **12/22/08**—Elijah's Place Holiday Grief Workshop
- **12/25 & 26/08**—Offices will be closed for Christmas
- **01/30/09**—Harvest of Hope Gala

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*providing help.
creating hope.*

Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas Social Concerns Newsletter

Volume XIX, Number 2

Holiday 2008

Hurricane Ike

Catholic Charities Helps Thousands

Just days after Ike swept through our community, Catholic Charities was there to provide help and create hope to those in need.



The Disaster Response Program under the direction of Randi Fertitta and Joanna Schrock worked with Catholic Charities employees and volunteers at 4 community resource sites distributing needed items to our community. We received deliveries from FEMA, the American Red Cross, and other charitable organizations such as Feed the Chil-

dren. We unloaded trucks... we loaded cars...we comforted those in need!

Our Points of Distribution (PODs) were located in Winnie at St. Louis Church, Orangefield, at St. Helens Church, LaBelle at the Volunteer Fire Department, and China at the elementary school. Special thanks goes out to all those locations and the people that worked so tirelessly to make sure those in need were taken care of.

In all, more than 10 thousand vehicles were serviced at our sites. Our last site closed on 9/27/08. We are now in

the process of calling all of those families to assess their continued needs. Through these phone calls we are able to direct the families to the appropriate community service, triage them into one of our existing programs, or complete the intake requirements to receive services through our disaster outreach.

Catholic Charities is focused primarily on the most vulnerable: low income, elderly, disabled, and /or single parent house holds in the most devastated areas.





Dean Terrebonne

News From the President **The Eye of the Hurricane and The Eye of God**

With our most recent experience of Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, I have been fascinated by the “weather” aspects of the storms, formation, tracking and potential for devastation; as well as the formation, planning and potential for response by our staff and our community. I had ample time to reflect on these aspects during the period without electricity – no lights, no refrigeration, no air conditioning, no computers, no TV!

Isn't it interesting how when the electricity goes out, we are all of a sudden “poor”? We all have a common thread of experience, having to do without. But, when the lights come back on, we quickly realize how fortunate we are to have these. What a blessing! Just as the eye wall of the storm brings the hardest impact, the eye of the hurricane brings peace – a time to catch your breath, regroup, look around and prepare once again for more. Well, in my mind, the eye of God is similar to that of the eye of the hurricane. When we look at one another, our community, through the eye of God we can experience peace, compassion, mercy and potential. At times of loss and devastation we need to remember to look through the eye of God to find these things within ourselves and in others.

I am very proud of our staff for their ability to work collaboratively with other organizations to plan and respond. Although some of our staff suffered severe damage to their home and loss of property and possessions, they found a way to put that aside and look to others – to serve. We are grateful to the volunteers who helped us at our four Community Resource Sites distribute emergency supplies to over 10,000 families. I am appreciative of the many social service and response agencies who continue to participate in the VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) to develop, implement and cultivate a community response. One agency cannot respond to all of the needs, but collectively we can respond as a community.

It is our hope, as we approach the holidays, that you will experience the peace, compassion, mercy and potential through the eye of God. We thank you for your continued prayers and support as we continue to address the needs of others affected by this storm, in addition to providing services through our other seven programs. On behalf of Catholic Charities we wish you a Happy Thanksgiving, Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing many of you at our Harvest of Hope Gala on Friday, January 30, 2009.

Dean M. Terrebonne President/CEO

New Phones & New Faces

Well, it has taken us a few bumps in the road and two hurricane evacuations, but we have finally gotten our new phone system functioning. Our new system is now enabling people from the outside to contact the central services offices directly.

- Central Services Facility - Main Operator 409-924-4400**
- Immigration Services..... 409-924-4413**
- Counseling Services.....409-924-4418**
- Parish Social Ministry.....409-924-4415**

- Disaster, Trauma, & Loss...409-924-4426**
- ABC Case Mgmt.....409-924-4425**
- Elijah's Place.....409-924-4419**
- Central Service Facility **FAX....409-832-0145**



LaTisha Vargas
ABC Case Management



Joyce Wilkinson
Interim HC Director

IKE CAN'T STOP US: GOOD TIMES 'R' COMING



Harvest of Hope Gala

Ike may have changed our timeline, but not our commitment to service. Catholic Charities quickly resumed all program services while at the same time assisting thousands with emergency disaster relief and on-going recovery. Won't you please join us for a night of merriment that will support our seven existing programs while celebrating our blessings.

It is time to start planning for the best breakfast in town. This year's Breakfast with the Bishop is scheduled for April 25, 2009. There is no better time to fellowship with your friends, enjoy a great breakfast, and support the Catholic Charities Programs. This event will once again be held at St. Anne Church Parish Hall. Come find out who the 2009 Humanitarian Award recipients will be.

Breakfast with the Bishop



Program Spotlight Parish Social Ministry

Parish Social Ministry is currently being coordinated by Ginny Smith. Ginny's leadership has resulted in a continuation of the Parish Social Ministry Leadership Series, Third Age Taskforce, and most recently a major outreach to those devastated and in need following Hurricane Ike.

Parish Social Ministry strives to assist parishioners, through the parish community to understand and act on Catholic Soc-

ial Teaching. This is achieved by identifying, supporting and training leaders who will.....

- * Provide direct service
- * Involve themselves in legislative advocacy
- * Organize community service
- * Unite in global solidarity

In the aftermath of Ike, the Parish Social Ministry Program offered assistance at each of the community resource sites: providing supplies, water,

Ensure, and cleaning kits to shut-ins. Contacted every parish in the Diocesan service area to assess parishioner needs in relation to home repair, groceries, supplies, and child-care. Lastly, is involved in the outreach efforts with the Disaster Response Program to assist those people in need as they are identified.

The Parish Social Ministry (PSM) Program has been called to serve during this time of disaster. Due to

excellent leadership, quality training, and a commitment to those in need....the PSM program community has responded to Care for God's Creation.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the PSM program, please contact Ginny at **409-924-4415**.

harvest of hope

Honoring the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word

Friday, January 30, 2009 7:00pm

*Janey Phelan, Event Chair
Carole Mattingly & Torchy, Co-Chairs*



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*providing help.
creating hope.*

Check out our site.....
www.catholiccharitiesbmt.org



CATHOLIC CHARITIES
OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS



CALLING ALL VOLUN-

A special “**THANK YOU!**” goes out to all the volunteers that assisted in meeting the needs of the community following Hurricane Ike. We couldn’t have responded to the needs without your support, dedication and encouragement.

We have transitioned

out of our emergency relief efforts and into our recovery phase. Available volunteer opportunities have changed as well, and we now primarily need volunteers to assist in calling back the thousands of people in need of assistance.

If interested, you will be

providing phone referrals, completing intake procedures and/or assisting with data entry of those in need.

Volunteers are also needed in our other programs for answering phones, planning and organizing projects, preparing and cleaning up for *Elijah’s Place* and all the duties associated with providing meals at the Hospitality Center.

If interested, please call:
409.924.4400

or
email us at **volunteer@
catholiccharitiesbmt.org**

COME TEAM WITH US!

Provide Help & Create Hope