





Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans 2011 Annual Report







Photos by: George Long Frank Methe Corinne Levy Margaret Dubuisson



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#### Brothers and sisters in Christ:

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says, "Whatever you did for the least of my brothers and sisters, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40). In our archdiocese, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans puts the Gospel into action by caring and providing for the poor and vulnerable of our region. From caring for the elderly to protecting the unborn, Catholic Charities is entrusted with providing for the physical needs of those in need, as well as for being the face and hands of Jesus Christ to those we are privileged to serve.

Each year brings new challenges and I am proud that Catholic Charities locally is consistently at the forefront of responding to the needs of the community. This can only be accomplished through the good work and dedication of the staff and the prayerful support of the community. As you read this annual report, know that the work of Catholic Charities touches the lives of so many in our community and not just the lives of those we serve – but those who make it possible for us to serve.

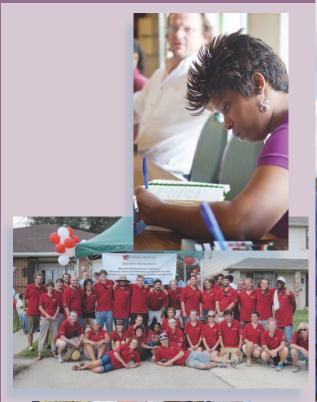
I am grateful to the Catholic Charities leadership and staff and I thank God for the people who make their work possible.

Wishing you God's blessings and with gratitude for your generosity, I am, Gratefully in Christ,

Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond

Archbishop of New Orleans

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"Act justly,
love tenderly and
walk humbly
with your God." Micah 6:8

### "A child cried last night. Did you hear her?"

I came across that quote recently in a letter I received in the mail. It reminded me of my first 10 years with Catholic Charities when I worked with abused and neglected children every day. Their stories were heart wrenching, their life experiences tragic. A young girl slashed by her mother's knife-wielding boyfriend. And another quiet, wounded child who will bear lifelong emotional and physical scars from discipline meted out with a lit cigarette. My heart still aches for all of these young lives I came to know. My heart has been forever transformed by journeying with them on the path to healing.

The psalmist proclaims that the Lord hears the cry of the poor. The Lord lifts up the broken hearted. And we are reminded time and again that the Lord acts through us. As the family of Catholic Charities, we are privileged to be the hands and heart of God in compassionate response to the poor and vulnerable. Our ministry is humbling and faith-filled.

Whether they're battered children, the frail elderly, homeless families, the hungry, young pregnant mothers, or those still struggling to recover from hurricanes and an oil spill, we recognize the face of Jesus in these sisters and brothers of ours who are so precious. We have seen God work miracles and transform lives.

A child cried last night. Because of your prayers and support, we were there to wipe away the tears and provide hope in an uncertain world. God bless you for being a part of the family of Catholic Charities.

Herdan R. Wadge
Gordon R. Wadge
President and CEO

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### **Head Start Centers**

### 17-year-old Narviero Rouser recalls only the faintest memories

of his days as a student at our Incarnate Word Head Start Center, but the 3 years of education he received there have had a long-lasting impact on his life. Even as a 4-year-old, the young boy impressed his Head Start teachers. He was bright and eager to learn, well-behaved and polite.

At his Head Start graduation, he was awarded the Providence Scholarship. This scholarship was established by a generous and anonymous Catholic Charities donor to provide a full scholarship for Catholic elementary and high school education to a Head Start graduate each

year.

Narviero completed his elementary school years at St. Joan of Arc Catholic School in New Orleans and graduated in May 2011 as salutatorian from Holy Rosary High School. He received a number of college scholarship offers and plans to attend Nicholls State University in Thibodaux.

Narviero comes from a troubled neighborhood not far from Incarnate Word Head Start Center. He's seen many young people succumb to crime and drugs and many who have dropped out of school.

"By seeing the struggling in my neighborhood, I knew I had to make it," Narviero said. "Failure was not an option because of the Providence Scholarship I had been blessed to win. I knew I had to keep my grades up to keep my scholarship."

Narviero is thankful for the opportunity to receive an excellent Catholic education beginning with his early education with Catholic Charities. "My mom couldn't have afforded the tuition any other way," he said.







Photo courtesy of Rocky Kirstner/NRDC

"Whoever has two shirts must give one to the man who has none, and whoever has food must share it." Luke 3:11

# Oil Spill Program

#### Eric Tiser's life has been rocked not once, but twice in the past 6 years.

This coastal Louisiana fisherman and his 3 sons lost everything they owned in Hurricane Katrina – the 2 trailer homes where they lived, 4 boats, a car and all of Eric's fishing equipment. The Army Corps of Engineers used his property for levee restoration projects, which in addition to his illiteracy and other hardships, has precluded Eric from being able to afford permanent housing even 6 years after the storm.

After the BP oil disaster in 2010, Eric despaired for help. He lost his ability to make money, as fishing, shrimping and crabbing areas had been closed or greatly restricted to fishing. His situation was bad before the spill, but suddenly being unable to work created new problems and made existing ones worse.

As a forever responder ministering to those in need, Catholic Charities has been assisting Eric and continues to journey with him in Christian solidarity on the long way to recovery. In the past year, he has gained access to health care, dental care, community food pantries, educational supplies, legal aid, U.S. Department of Wildlife and Fisheries grants and more. Our case managers helped him to plan a budget and create a hurricane preparedness plan.

Eric's situation is still dire. He often cannot make ends meet. Buying gas is a luxury he is sometimes unable to afford. Some of his fishing gear was recently stolen.

Our case managers and Spirit of Hope counselors offer services at Catholic parishes in Louisiana coastal communities where, contrary to the perception of many, fishing families continue to suffer.





#### Shatarra Gibson is not just a Catholic

Charities employee. During the day, she works as a program coordinator for Cornerstone Builders, our program to help the formerly incarcerated. But in the evenings and on weekends, she extends her workday ministry and serves as a volunteer mentor to children whose parents are in jail.

Shatarra's 2 mentees, Lashawna, 12, and

Keyshawna, 11, have experienced the effect of incarceration their entire lives. Their father figure is an inmate at Angola State Penitentiary. Other members of their family have also been in and out of jail.

When Catholic Charities began offering bus trips for families to visit loved ones at Angola, Lashawna and Keyshawna's family started making regular trips. When we offered mentors for children with incarcerated parents, the girls began meeting with Shatarra.

Each month, Shatarra spends about 12 hours with the girls, taking them to her apartment to cook, swim or do homework together. Sometimes they visit parks or the public library. Sometimes Shatarra introduces them to new experiences.

"Lashawna's favorite activity was going to a Mexican restaurant for the first time," Shatarra said. "She couldn't believe you could actually fry ice cream!"

Shatarra thinks that the individual attention the children in the program receive is a reason for its success. "Sometimes the parent at home can't provide such individualized attention because of work or other family members living at the house," she said. "Every kid probably wants time like this. Being a mentor to children with incarcerated parents is my way of answering God's call to minister to the imprisoned."

Right now, there are 37 mentors matched with children in the program, and 26 children are still waiting for mentors. Shatarra uses her own experience as a mentor to encourage other community members to participate. "It doesn't matter how young a person is – you can still learn from them," she said.

"Remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice and let the oppressed go free." Isaiah 58:6



# Ciara Independent Living



## "For I was ill and you cared for me..." Matt 25:36

# Cyril isn't the type of person you'd expect to wind up on the streets. He is college-educated, has lived abroad, and has a family that is active in his life. But Cyril's struggle with mental illness has caused years of despair and sporadic homelessness.

In his early adult years, Cyril began hearing demonic voices in his head and was eventually diagnosed with schizophrenia. His mental illness, even when controlled with medication, often overwhelmed him, and his condition eventually led him to live on the streets and beaches in Florida for months on end.

Cyril never told his siblings about his problems, even when he was sleeping on the streets, spare couches and shelters. He didn't want to trouble them.

After a hospitalization, Cyril finally discovered Ciara Independent Living, a program of Catholic Charities. Ciara helps people living with mental illness by providing supportive housing. While Cyril waits for Social Security disability benefits and for his permanent supportive housing application to be approved by the State, he has a home at Ciara.

Cyril finally shared his experience with his siblings, and they now help him to pay his rent at Ciara when he is unable to maintain employment. On good days, he is able to ride his bike to work, visit the neighborhood library, and go to church. On bad days, he as the support of the team at Ciara to help him stay on his medication and try to get past whatever the voices tell him.

New Orleans' homeless collaborative, UNITY of Greater New Orleans, recently found that 79% of the homeless population in New Orleans is disabled, nearly twice the national rate. Of the estimated 9,200 homeless people in Orleans and Jefferson parishes, 7,968 suffer from some kind of disability, whether mental or physical.

Programs like Ciara help to address one of the root causes of homelessness: mental illness. These programs are necessary not only to house the mentally ill, but to help bring them healing.

## Food for Families/ Food for Seniors

"For I was hungry and you gave me food..." Matt 25:35



Elaine Varist is a good south Louisiana cook. She

knows how to take a little of this and a little of that and turn it into something delicious. The 40 pound box of food she and her husband Fery receive every month from our Food for Families/Food for Seniors program helps her to stretch her grocery dollars and put wholesome food on the table.

69-year-old Elaine has a special connection to the Food for Familes program. She worked at one of the distribution centers for 15 years before Hurricane Katrina caused the closure of that site. She was aware of the program's impact on senior citizens trying to make ends meet. After she turned 60 and qualified, she became a recipient. Her 89-year-old husband has been receiving commodities even longer.

"Every month, it's a big help: the juice, the vegetables, the fruit and beans. Those are all things I don't have to buy at the grocery store now. This month, we got a big can of chili! I'll use that on hot dogs," said Mrs. Varist.

One of her favorites is the canned beef stew. She dresses it up with her own chopped onion and bell pepper, adds a bit of water and cooks it down until the flavors blend. "It really turns out nice," she said while preparing dinner for her husband.

Our Food for Families/Food for Seniors program follows the example of Christ when he fed the hungry with loaves and fishes. The program was established in 1970 to warehouse, pack, transport and distribute supplemental food boxes to sites all over the state of Louisiana.

The boxes contain nutritionally balanced food to improve the diets and health of low-income residents, especially senior citizens and expecting mothers and their infants and children under 6 years of age.

### By the numbers:

July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011

- 27,730,655 pounds of food distributed
- 69,154 participants
- Distributions conducted at 400+ locations each month
- Sites in all **64** civil parishes in Louisiana
- 45 distribution sites in the Greater New Orleans metropolitan area
- More than 16,000 people in the Greater New Orleans area participate each month
- **98%** of participants are senior citizens

# Office of Justice and Peace

#### Traci Taylor moved to New

Orleans from Michigan for an engineering job, but 3 years later, she has drastically changed her career path. Now an AmeriCorps VISTA worker with HandsOn New Orleans, Traci was inspired by her world travels and sharing of faith experiences with Holy Name of Jesus Parish's JustFaith group. JustFaith is an initiative of the Catholic Charities Office of Justice and Peace.

Catholic identity was always a strong part

of Traci's life. When Traci moved to New Orleans in 2008, she joined Holy Name of Jesus Parish and its JustFaith group.

"My introduction to JustFaith came at a good time," Traci said. This "good time" was after a trip to her birthplace, South Korea, where she was exposed to a new culture and its systemic social issues and mores. "The visit to Korea shifted the lens I viewed the world through," she said.

Traci felt called to learn how to integrate

faith into her daily life, beyond going to church on Sunday. Her journey through JustFaith, the first year as a group member and the next as a facilitator, helped her to figure out exactly how that could work. She joined the Holy Name of Jesus Parish Council and became a Catholic Relief Services Fair Trade Ambassador.

In another eye-opening trip, this time to Palestine and Israel, Traci met with different faith groups – Catholic, Christian and non-Christian – and left with a strong sense of

communion.

When she returned to New Orleans, Traci started her new job with HandsOn, going into underserved neighborhoods to identify existing assets and to empower the people living in these areas to effect change.

"I know that I'm called to work in a socially-focused career as a vocation and not just as a good job," Traci said. "Being able to serve others is being able to serve Jesus."



# Community Staffing Services

Dennis once lived on the streets in the Central City area, where many homeless people congregate. He felt hopeless until discovering a service offered by Catholic Charities right in the neighborhood.

Dennis wasn't always down-and-out. He grew up in St. Rose, LA and worked on tugboats on the Mississippi River for several years. He was working towards a captain's license, and he and his wife had planned to raise a family in the St. Rose community. But a few years ago, Dennis' parents and wife were killed in an automobile accident. This tragedy shattered Dennis' life and affected his ability to work. Dennis lost his job and soon became homeless. He ended up on the streets near our St. John the Baptist Community Center.

Once he found Catholic Charities, Dennis was able to enroll in the homeless employment class at St. John, and registered with Catholic Charities' Community Staffing Services, which helps unemployed people find jobs. Dennis was motivated to get off the street and was quickly able to start work on a construction site in New Orleans. His work ethic impressed his supervisors.

Dennis recently qualified to receive housing assistance through St. John Community Center's supportive housing program, and now maintains his own apartment. The compassionate assistance Dennis received from Catholic Charities empowered him to rebuild his life and has

renewed his spirits.

We continue to provide supportive services to help Dennis succeed in his transition from being homeless and dependent on assistance to becoming a self-sustaining contributor to his community.



# Volunteering: An enriching ministry

"You shall freely open your hand to your brother, to your needy and poor in your land." Deuteronomy 15:11



### Volunteers are the lifeblood of our ministry.

They work hand-in-hand with our staff to form the safety net of service that we offer for the poor and vulnerable, following Jesus' example of washing the feet of his disciples. Our volunteers are as varied as the people we serve. They are black, white, Asian and Hispanic. Many are local and some travel great distances to serve alongside us. Some are Catholic and some are not. In 2010, almost 24,000 selfless people worked with us in a volunteer role. We couldn't operate without our volunteers and deeply appreciate their service.

We know how much we need our volunteers, but we were surprised to learn that they often needed us just as much. Some volunteers tell us their experience at Catholic Charities changed their lives and influenced career decisions. More than a few have traveled here for a short volunteer stint and ended up relocating to New Orleans permanently and joining the Catholic Charities staff. Others tell us they derive such blessings and benefits from volunteering, that they have been at it for decades and have encouraged others to join them.

### **Hector and Anthony Castro**

Brothers Anthony and Hector Castro came to the New Orleans area from New York as second and third graders. Neither could speak English and they were placed in a public school in Jefferson Parish. Both boys were smart, but the language barrier proved to be an obstacle. Anthony, now an 11th grader, remembers being broken-hearted when his second grade report card showed a long row of "F's" in the grade column. Hector, a high school senior, tells a similar story. They boys' world changed when their parents learned about the counseling and tutoring services of our Hispanic Apostolate Community Services, then nicknamed "The Little School." Both boys enrolled and their grades quickly turned around.

As Hector grew older and became an academic standout, he became a volunteer at the center which had helped him so much as a child. Today, he is planning for college and says he hopes to become a chemical engineer. He's been so successful at tutoring and mentoring the children that he's been hired as a staff member. He says that even though he's now paid for his work, he will always want to volunteer to help others.

"I think it's good, because so many programs don't have the funds to pay for helpers. I'll never forget the volunteers who tutored me when I was little," Hector said. "I want to help others now."

His brother Anthony echoes his sentiment. An accomplished saxophone player, he hopes to become a member of LSU's band in a few years. But for now, he's motivated to help tutor kids who are struggling with school.

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"I thought to myself, maybe I can be one of those tutors like the ones who helped me so much. It's so good to help them and see a smile on their face when they finally overcome a hurdle and understand their school work," Anthony said. "I used to get Fs on my report card, so I know the struggle that most of these kids are going through. I want them to know that if I can do it, they can too. Nothing is impossible if you set your mind to it and work hard."

### Lydia Rose

Lydia Rose is a long-time volunteer with St. Vincent Maternity Clinic, a Catholic Charities program that provides quality prenatal and obstetric services to expectant mothers. Lydia first encountered the St. Vincent program during her days in nursing school. Many years later, Lydia adopted her son Ben through Catholic Charities. She wanted to give back and began volunteering at St. Vincent and has devoted 1 day a week at the clinic for more than 10 years.

"It's much more of a gift for me than it is for them," Lydia said of her volunteer experience. "I receive so many blessings through my experience at the clinic."





#### **Marlon Favorite**

Marlon Favorite is as imposing a presence at Café Hope as he is on the football field. The former LSU star made it to the NFL, but being real is more important than being famous to the kids he works with. Marlon relates to the kids, not as an NFL star, but as a player who has seen his share of adversity and has had the courage and work ethic to get through it.

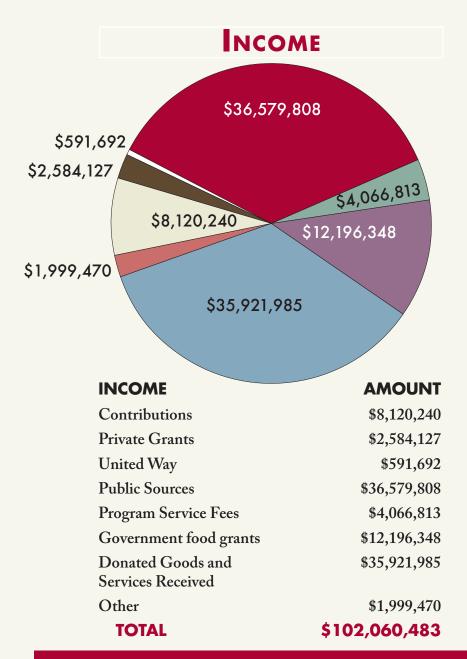
"I do use my football experience - being cut 7 times isn't easy. But I never gave up. And that's the same message I want to send to the youth in this program. I keep it real with them. I tell them, 'It's not easy to do what I do, and I know it's not easy for you growing up here.' I know this area of New Orleans and how hard it is."

Marlon has completed the mentor training that is an integral part of Café Hope's program, and is now a mentor to an at-risk teen. But in addition to his one-on-one commitment, Marlon is at the café several times a week, and he has one of the toughest jobs there. When a young person doesn't show up for work or meetings, Marlon hits the streets to find them.

Favorite acknowledges that the at-risk youth trying for a new start at Café Hope are a tough bunch to reach. But he's more than up for the task. "As long as I reach just one, I did my job."

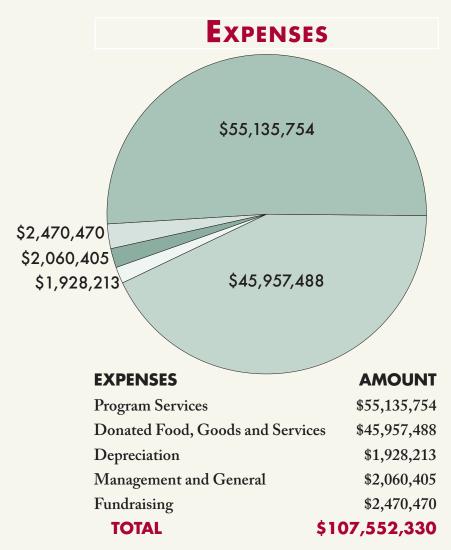


### "For I rescued the poor who cried out for h



In order to save costs during these difficult economic times, we have listed our generous donors online at www.ccano.org/2011-donor-listing

## elp, the orphans, and the unassisted." Job 29:12



- (a) Unaudited fiscal year ended June 30, 2011
- (b) Program services does not include 821,966 commodity food boxes distributed by Food for Families/Food for Seniors with a retail value of approximately \$41,098,300
- ( c) A portion of current year expenses were covered by grants from prior years



## **Catholic Charities Programs**

#### **CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

Oil Spill Program Parish and Community Ministries Sojourner Truth Neighborhood Center Therapeutic Family Services

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Crescent House New Orleans Family Justice Center Project SAVE Sexual Assault Program

#### **EDUCATION & YOUNG ADULTS**

Adult Education After School Assembly Café Hope\* Head Start Centers Independent Living Skills Program Summer Witness

#### **FOOD & NUTRITION**

Food for Families/Food for Seniors Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans & Acadiana\*

#### **HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS**

Baronne Street Transitional Housing Beyond Shelter Bridges to Self Sufficiency CARE Center Jefferson CARE Center Voyage House

#### **HURRICANE RECOVERY**

Operation Helping Hands

#### **IMMIGRATION**

Hispanic Apostolate Community Services Immigration Services Refugee and Anti-Trafficking Services

#### **JUSTICE & EMPLOYMENT**

Community Staffing Services Cornerstone Builders Office of Justice and Peace

#### MENTAL HEALTH

Catholic Charities School-Based
Counseling
Ciara Independent Living
Ciara Permanent Housing
Counseling Solutions – Covington
Counseling Solutions – Main/Metairie
Counseling Solutions – St. Charles
Counseling Solutions – St. John
Counseling Solutions – St. John
Counseling Solutions – St. John
Counseling Solutions – Slidell
St. Louise de Marillac Ministry
Spirit of Hope

#### PHYSICAL HEALTH

Deaf Action Center Marque Medical Emergency Grant Padua Community Homes Padua Home & Community-Based Program Padua Pediatric Program

#### **PRO-LIFE SERVICES**

ACCESS Pregnancy & Referral Centers Adoption Services St. Vincent Maternity Clinic

#### **SENIORS**

Adult Day Health Care Centers Foster Grandparents PACE Greater New Orleans\*

\*Affiliated ministries of Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans

# "Did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith?" James 2:5

### What makes Catholic Charities Catholic?



This question is one that all of us at Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans should keep paramount in our minds and hearts as we live our mission daily to care for the needy and most vulnerable in our community.

Catholic identity in Catholic Charities is animated by the social teachings and vision of Catholicism which bring our work to life as we live the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. We strive to infuse the Gospel into our care for those we serve, and we are committed to ensuring that

Catholic hospitality is extended to all with whom we come into contact.

Pope Benedict XVI reminds us what Catholic identity in Catholic Charities is NOT, when he says: "Those who practice charity in the Church's name must never seek to impose the Church's faith upon others. We realize that a pure and generous love is the best witness to the God in whom we believe and by whom we are driven to love." Catholic identity is not about ministering only to Catholics in need. As Archbishop Gregory Aymond frequently says, "We don't serve because THEY are Catholic. We serve because WE are Catholic."

I look forward to working with my colleagues at Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans and our community partners to bring to life the social teachings of the Catholic Church as we continue to build a just, caring and faith-filled society...one heart at a time.

God love you.

Deacon Steve Ferran

Vice President, Catholic Identity and Mission

### July 1, 2010 — June 30, 2011

# Your prayerful support and financial help enabled us to:

Serve 101,000 individuals people of all colors, backgrounds and religions who were hurting and needed help

Provide
42,306,036
meals so that

Give 92,373 hours of in-home service to the disabled so that our clients can remain in their homes where they are most comfortable

Educate 2,743 people

Head Start, G.E.D., Citizenship Classes, young adults, at-risk youth, English as Second Language, afterschool tutoring and more

Provide \$9,605,362
in direct assistance
assist those in need with
crisis funding for basic needs

Serve 1,284
people through our pro-life
programs adoptions and
services to pregnant mothers

Assist 6,683 immigrants and refugees

we continue our 300
year tradition of helping
new citizens settle in the
U.S. They come from all
over the globe: Brazil,
Myanmar, Colombia,
Costa Rica, Cuba, Iraq,
the Philippines, Poland,
South Africa, Mauritania
and many other

Provide **62,185** nights of shelter

emergency shelter for the homeless and victims of domestic violence as well as residential care for medically fragile children and adults

Our special thanks to the 23,619 volunteers who assisted us this year in our mission to serve the poor and vulnerable. You provided 225,628 hours of service, assisting us to serve as the hands and feet of the Lord in service to His people.

# Like what you see? Get involved!

#### **DONATE**

Use the remittance envelope provided in this report, make a secure donation online at **www.ccano.org/ways-you-can-give** or call Helen Smith at 504-592-5688.

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Visit us online at www.ccano.org/volunteers/registration-requirements/ or call Volunteer Services at 504-310-6962.

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#### **SPREAD THE WORD**

Pass this report on to a friend!

If you'd like us to send a copy of this report to a friend or relative, call 504-592-5690 or email **clevy@ccano.org** and we'll share our good news.

Finally, and most importantly, we ask that you remember us in

**PRAYER** 



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Archdiocese of New Orleans

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