



For Immediate Release
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Bishop David Zubik to Host 27th Annual Bishop's Dinner for Catholic Charities

Pittsburgh, PA --- Bishop David A. Zubik will host the 27th Annual Bishop's Dinner for Catholic Charities, **Friday, May 15, 2009 at the Westin Convention Center Hotel** in downtown Pittsburgh. The theme of the gala event is "*Called by the Holy Spirit to a Mission to Greatness,*" an invitation to all to join in the mission of Catholic Charities.

Bishop Zubik said that the "word 'great' is a testament to the greatness of our God who leads us and challenges us to be neighbors of love and compassion embracing the gift of service. As host of the dinner, I am honored to be able to invite the participation and support of the people of Pittsburgh who have always been so generous to Catholic Charities."

"Many come to Catholic Charities during difficult days of great struggle," Bishop Zubik said. "This dinner allows Catholic Charities to provide help and create hope that is so desperately needed. So let us eagerly respond to our Christian call to service and while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all." (Galatians 6:10)

Bishop Zubik will present *Caritas* Awards, named for the Latin word for "charity," to honor those whose achievements reflect the mission of the organization. The 2009 awardees are:

John Goetz, former president of the Catholic Charities Board of Directors will receive the Caritas Award for Leadership. Goetz served on the Catholic Charities Board of Directors from

2003 to 2008 and assumed leadership of the Board in September 2006. As President, he led the way for the concept and implementation of the Catholic Charities Free Health Care Center and the agency's strategic plan, *Mission to Greatness*.

Receiving the Caritas Award for Service are siblings, Matthew and Laura Conti of Franklin Park. Matthew, a sophomore at the University of Notre Dame, and Laura, a senior at North Allegheny High School are the founders of "Our Hearts to Your Soles" an organization that recruits volunteers to provide foot care and shoes to the homeless. Under the Conti's leadership, the outreach has grown to 40 cities throughout the United States. Last Thanksgiving, more than 4,000 people were helped nationally including 200 through Catholic Charities in Pittsburgh .

Mike Clark, WTAE-TV news anchor and reporter will receive the Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl "Flame of Hope" Award for his selfless work as a community ambassador. In addition to the Catholic Charities Executive Board of Directors, he serves on several other boards, including DePaul School for Hearing and Speech, The Chimbote Foundation and the Forest Hills/Churchill Baseball Association. He also volunteers his time for numerous other non profit organizations and serves as a motivational speaker and master of ceremonies at community events.

Saints John and Paul Parish in Franklin Park will be the recipient of the inaugural "Living the Spirit" Award that recognizes a Catholic parish for putting faith into action through extraordinary service to the community. Under the leadership of Father Joseph McCaffrey, pastor, the apostolic outreach of the parish includes Senior Connections, a ministry that helps the elderly with home repairs; a shawl ministry that creates and distributes prayer shawls for those who are ill or shut-ins; and, monthly food drives conducted for area food banks. In addition, the parish allocates nearly 23 percent of its annual operating budget for social outreach.

Serving as co-chairs of the 27th Annual Bishop's Dinner are Louis Astorino, CEO and Chairman of Astorino, and his wife Jean. Larry Richert, host of the KDKA Radio Morning News returns as emcee. Premiere sponsors of the event are the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Highmark, Federated Investors, Jones Day, Mr. & Mrs. Joseph L. Calihan, and UPMC Health Plan/UPMC Mercy.

Susan Rauscher, executive director of Catholic Charities said, "This annual event, rich in tradition, is a celebration of the goodwill of the community for the mission of Catholic Charities. I am very grateful to all who support the agency through the dinner because it provides significant funding that allows us to provide care and support to our neighbors through our many programs."

The 27th Annual Bishop's Dinner for Catholic Charities begins at 6 p.m. with a general reception. Tickets are \$300 per person and may be obtained by calling Bethany Shaw in the Office of Advancement, 412-456-6968 or bshaw@ccpgh.org.

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Rooted in the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Pittsburgh has been serving the people of southwestern Pennsylvania since 1910, regardless of religious affiliation. With offices in Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Greene, Lawrence and Washington counties, Catholic Charities provides programs and services to help individuals and families in their time of greatest need.