

El Santo Niño Center Hosts Danny Trejo

Recently, Danny Trejo, aka “Machete,” one of the most prolific of American actors, visited El Santo Niño Community Services Center. He spoke to the students about his own life experience, including spending 11 years in and out of jail due to his lack of education and bad choices that he made in his early life.

Trejo talked about the importance of getting an education and staying away from drugs and gangs. He also talked to El Santo Niño Center’s young clients about what he did to change his life and become a successful, famous person.

For nine years, Fernando Sarabia, Jr., Program Coordinator of El Santo Niño Center, has been organizing cultural and recreational activities and referrals to community resources for the youth who come to the center. Fernando says, “It is important for us to keep our young clients motivated, so they could become successful in their lives.” He mentors 30 to 35 students per month.

In the past year, El Santo Niño provided 8,953 services to 400 at-risk youth through its Adeste Child Care and an after-school tutoring and mentoring program for middle and senior high school students. ❖

San Pedro Region Staff Help Count Homeless in Long Beach

by Bruce Hackman, San Pedro Regional Director

The San Pedro Region participated in the City of Long Beach homeless count 2015. The Homeless Count is a biannual event conducted by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority and the City of Long Beach Health & Human Services, a joint powers authority. Over 300 hundred people volunteered for this event.



The homeless count was held one early morning in late January. Twelve of Catholic Charities’ staff, San Pedro Region advisory board members and I struck out into the streets, alleys, vacant buildings and parks in Long Beach in search of homeless persons.

One of my most memorable experiences of this day was when I encountered several homeless persons residing in a park. The entire park was occupied by the homeless. There were some homeless persons residing in discarded campers with no plumbing or heating. Some people were sleeping on the cold concrete with just a blanket.

As we were trying to provide these persons with information about shelters, it started raining. These persons were not moved by the inclement weather to seek shelter.

Many thoughts came to my mind when I was participating in the homeless count. The dominant thoughts were how fortunate I was: I had a house to go to, a car and job. I did not have to stay out in the cold.

The homeless count changed me, because I became more determined to help the homeless find food, shelter, and dignity. ❖

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Message from the Executive Director, Rev. Monsignor Gregory A. Cox

Traditional marriage has been on the decline in the United States for decades. The structure of the family looks very different. Forty-one percent of children are born out of wedlock and, when one includes other factors, this means that the overwhelming majority of boys and girls today will spend at least part of their childhood with a single parent.

Families are more multigenerational; around one in five Americans ages 25 to 34 is living in a multigenerational household, which is roughly double the rate in 1980. The number of children living with a grandparent has increased 64% over the past two decades. Based on the U.S. Census data, 7.8 million out of the 74.1 million children in the United States lived with at least one grandparent, up from 4.7 million in 1991.

Children ages two to 17 will spend ten times more time in the company of some form of media than they do with their own mothers. By the time they graduate from high school, most boys and girls will also have spent three times as many hours sitting in front of a screen as they have spent in the classroom.

Compared with children a decade ago, today's boys and girls spend 79 more minutes of free time each day listening to music, watching TV or movies, playing video games or surfing the web. Total media exposure amounts to seven hours and 58 minutes per day, or more than 53 hours per week, up from six hours 19 minutes a decade earlier.

Social media, education, parish life and television are the areas that need more Church involvement. Family life issues, like commitment, love, fidelity and parental responsibilities, are critical in strengthening family relationships.

In October of last year, Pope Francis held a Synod of Bishops that focused on family life. There will be a follow-up gathering to discuss the strengthening of the family when the Holy Father visits Philadelphia this year. ❖



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**PROCEEDS FROM THIS EVENT FEED,
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WHO ARE POOR AND HOMELESS.**

Catholic Charities in Long Beach Provides Clients with Shelter and Peace

“Linda Silva,” a single mother with four children, never thought that she would become homeless. Linda had a full time job as a cashier at a restaurant in Long Beach and attended school to obtain her GED.

Everything changed for Silva after the birth of her youngest child. Thomas was born with cystic fibrosis and required the attention of his mother around the clock. Eventually, Silva quit both school and her job to keep up with the demanding illness of her child. Consequently, Linda lost her home and had no place to stay.

Silva was accepted into Catholic Charities' Elizabeth Ann Seton Residence where she and her children were able to have a safe place to sleep and she could receive help to get her life back together.

While staying at the shelter, Silva attended parenting classes. Her children were placed in childcare so that she could work, once again, on obtaining her GED. She also learned new parenting skills in regard to how to deal with her youngest child's illness, and soon was able to more easily take care of him.

Later, Silva was referred to Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority for a housing voucher through Section 8. She and her children are now moving into a three bedroom house.

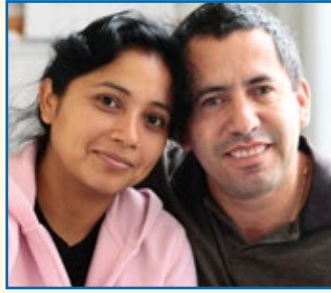
Linda said, “Catholic Charities' shelter made me feel at home and gave me peace. It turned a horrible situation that I was going through into a blessing.” Silva is grateful for everything that Catholic Charities has done for her. ❖



Linda and her children celebrated Christmas at Elizabeth Ann Seton Residence.

Photo: Shereka Floyd

Pomona Community Services Center Reunifies Homeless Family



Unable to work because of injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident, “Steve Reyes” lost his lucrative job in construction with union benefits. Steve’s hospitalization and medical expenses took a heavy toll on the family’s disability income and savings. They managed to stay together for a few years but could not keep their home and moved from one rental property to another.

Then the Reyes family became homeless and “Steve” and “Mary” had to participate in the winter shelter program and make the Pomona National Guard Armory their temporary home. Their two children, ages 18 and 14, lived with their grandmother.

Steve recovered and returned to work. Catholic Charities’ Pomona Community Services Center provided move-in assistance, reuniting the family under one roof. Pomona Community Services is partially supported by the City of Pomona ESG program and Inland Empire United Way. ❖

photo: Mike Richardson

Loaves & Fishes Program Assists a Single Father

Catholic Charities’ Glendale Community Services Center’s Loaves & Fishes program works with the City of Glendale’s Homeless Prevention program which funds partial payment of rent or utilities.



A single father with two children was desperately seeking assistance because his electricity had been shut off. His total yearly income is \$18,000.

The Loaves & Fishes case manager called Glendale Water & Power to have the electricity turned on and she paid the \$264 bill through the Homeless Prevention Program.

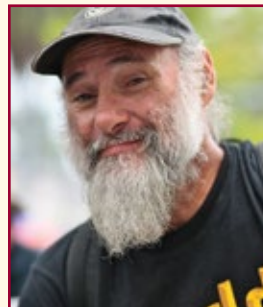
This client’s daughter had been diagnosed as bi-polar and schizophrenic. The case manager connected them with a support group.

Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry program will give the family food, fresh fruit and vegetables on a monthly basis. The case manager was able to give all three family members new sheets and blankets for their beds. ❖

photo: Mike Richardson

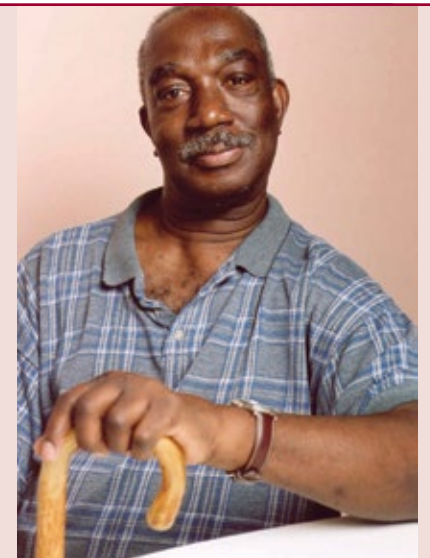
Catholic Charities and Restorative Court Program Help Veteran in Santa Barbara

Catholic Charities in Santa Barbara County was honored by the Santa Barbara Women Lawyers Foundation for its work with the Restorative Court system throughout the community. The Restorative Court process was created to stop the cycle that can be found with the chronically homeless who seem to revolve in and out of jail and/or the emergency rooms of local hospitals.



Recently, a veteran, who had been through the Restorative Court Program and had become a mentor for a fellow veteran through the Veterans Court system, received a housing voucher after being homeless for 17 years. Catholic Charities’ Santa Barbara Community Services Center was able to send a bed and other furniture, provide food from its pantry, and help him get settled into his new home quickly. ❖

photo: Mike Richardson



Pomona Center and Society of St. Vincent de Paul Keep Senior’s Home

“John,” 68 years old and disabled, shared a mobile home with his elderly parents in Pomona. When his parents went to an assisted living facility, John was without their income to pay for the rent and utilities.

John went to the Catholic Charities’ Pomona Community Services Center for assistance. The case worker contacted the mobile home park manager and was able to negotiate that John continue staying there. Catholic Charities helped John with one month of rental assistance. Society of St. Vincent de Paul conferences located at Holy Name of Mary Church, San Dimas, and St. Joseph Church, Pomona, raised enough funds to prevent John’s eviction.

John then learned that Social Security increased his income. He expressed his gratitude to Catholic Charities and the Society of St. Vincent De Paul. ❖

photo: Catholic Charities USA

Guadalupe Center Partners with LAPD Topanga Division

Catholic Charities' Guadalupe Community Services Center in Canoga Park has been building bridges in the past seven years. The LAPD Chief's Office and the LAPD Topanga Division in the West San Fernando Valley have been strong supporters of a partnership with Guadalupe Center in order to work with families in communities of great need.

They bring officers to the center to give out public information, to attend special events such as Easter Egg Hunts and Halloween Costume parades and parties, to help serve Thanksgiving Dinner each year, to participate in the annual Children's Christmas Party with Santa Claus, and to co-sponsor the National Night Out at the Center for over 400 attendees from the surrounding communities.

The new Bike Program, initiated by the Topanga Division, targeted Guadalupe Center as the first organization to receive refurbished bikes, which their young cadets repaired to be given to the community. Capt. Maureen Ryan, the new Division Captain, came for a tour to see the center, about which her stellar staff and her predecessor, Cpt. Jorge Rodriguez, had informed her. She brought ten bikes with helmets to be given to youngsters at Guadalupe Center. It was a great event, with over



LAPD Officer gives a bike helmet to a young Guadalupe Center client.

50 families attending the raffle for the bikes; raffle tickets were earned in Guadalupe Centers' Learning Center, ESL Class, and Refugee Resettlement program. All ten bikes were won by boys and girls who never had a bike, as well as by some adults who needed one to ride to work or to an ESL class.

These families are experiencing the humanity of LAPD. Trust is being built in a two-way manner. Together, the LAPD and Guadalupe Center are moving in the right direction for all the community. ❀

photo: Home Sweet Home Productions



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Catholic Charities' OASIS Senior Citizen Program at Guadalupe Center in Canoga Park provided 4,301 services to 179 clients in the past year.

photo: Catholic Charities USA



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