

September 2009

Dear Kyra,

I write to join with you in welcoming the warm days of fall, a last focus on the remaining months of the year. It has been a challenging year for our neighbors, those who lost jobs, lost homes. The local unemployment rate is unprecedented in recent history, and the overall economic crisis is at a level most of us have never experienced.

Yet we are all pitching in and helping. I heard a story this week of a 7 year-old boy; after hearing on TV about people who are hungry, he asked his parents what he could do to help. His first step, his first gesture, inspired a large community of folks to pitch in to help. These stories are the most precious, the most inspiring.

Over the last few months we experienced the largest increase in families in need of emergency shelter in our history. Our shelters are packed, and we are doing what we have always done to provide food, shelter, clothing, parenting skills, job preparedness...we are simply doing more of it. There are first-time homeless families and many who have lost their housing or jobs. In Napa, we see young adults and young single mothers challenged by the narrowing job market, and we help them with employment and living skills that will pave their path to independent living.

With your help, the employees and volunteers of Catholic Charities can face the approaching rainy months, when our homeless shelters and transitional housing programs are full to overflowing. You already know we won't turn anyone away who seeks shelter this winter; we will find a way to help them.

We see the personal effects of the current economic crisis – more people seeking help – as an increased challenge, one we can meet. But as in the past, we count on the help of many in the community – yours too.

It is comforting to us, and I hope to you also, to know Catholic Charities has always been, and always will be, the arms of the community reaching out a helping hand to people in need. You will feel inspired when you read about Marlo and they way we help her; she is just the latest reason we do what we do at Catholic Charities.

Please read the back panel about the special needs at our shelters and housing programs in Santa Rosa and Napa. Talk to your family about what you could do to

help others by supporting Catholic Charities. There is one very easy way to help, and you can start it today: Start a small monthly pledge – with a donation of only \$50 a month we can provide a family with meals for nearly two weeks. Consider giving of your time by volunteering in one of our many programs. Join us today, help us prepare for the upcoming winter, and make a difference in your community. Whatever you can give, it will be a great benefit to those in need.

On behalf of the hundreds of volunteers and employees of Catholic Charities, thank you for being an important part of the community.

Sincerely,



Larry Lakes, Executive Director

Let me introduce you to one of our special neighbors.

Marlo, a mother, spent several years trying hard to keep up with housework, but even the simple act of cooking exhausted her. Last year she was diagnosed with leukemia, and it was discovered too late for a cure. Marlo tells us she has about three years to live.

If Marlo's problems were not enough, she and her husband lost their home after a large increase in rent. Becoming homeless was a blessing of sorts; she and her husband and four-year-old Todd came to the Family Support Center and found an understanding and

caring environment for Marlo. While Justin works as a Certified Nursing Assistant, Todd goes to Head Start, and she can rest at the shelter. "I wouldn't be okay without the Center staff," she said. "They are like a second family to me." Staff found a special mattress pad to prevent the bruising she experiences, and keep tabs on her well-being. "I don't know what I would do without Catholic Charities."

Before the family moves out in about three months, Marlo will take some life-extending treatments, and will recuperate in a special room to avoid germs.

In the meantime, Marlo wants to conduct parenting classes at the shelter for other parents. "I'd like to share how reading and really listening to your children makes a big difference. I've always wanted to work here," she said. "I'd like to help out."



How you can volunteer and help – [www.srcharities.org](http://www.srcharities.org)



## Join a Hope Works Wonders Tour

Meet some of the people who were helped by Catholic Charities. No cost, no donations requested. Just 1 hour of inspiration and hope. All tours 12 noon to 1 PM, 987 Airway Ct., Santa Rosa.

**Upcoming tours: Fridays Sept. 11 & 18, Oct. 2, Oct. 9, Oct. 16; Tuesdays Sept. 22, Oct. 27**

Contact Rebecca at 528-8712 x 158 or [rsvp@srcharities.org](mailto:rsvp@srcharities.org). Group tours arranged by appointment.

Catholic Charities  
PO Box 4900 Santa Rosa, CA  
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707-528-8712  
[www.srcharities.org](http://www.srcharities.org)

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### Ways you can help our shelters

#### Family Support Center needs

Blankets & lightly used sheets and towels  
Extra large cloth aprons; flatware, cups and glasses  
Baby formula, wipes, food; Diapers 4 - 6  
Brooms, buckets & mops; Pine Sol, laundry soap & bleach  
Outdoor tools – rakes, shovels, digging tools  
Call Carol at 542-5426 ext 103

#### Rainbow House and Home Base (Napa)

Van for donation pickups and client outings  
Playground equipment and toys  
Call Carmen at 224-4403

#### Housing Program (Santa Rosa)

Diapers - pull-ups; sizes 3- 5; Baby wipes  
Newer toys & play equipment for all ages  
New socks and underwear all ages

Family size shampoo, toothpaste  
Kitchen dishes, pots/pans, utensils  
All kinds of soap – kitchen, laundry, etc.  
School supplies for J.C. students  
Sheets – queen and twin  
Gently used furniture (esp. dressers, tables, chairs)  
Call Jesica at 575-0215

#### Homeless Service Center (Santa Rosa)

Laundry soap and bleach Tampons  
Coffee Towels Socks Cold medicines and antibiotic  
Disposable razors, shampoo and bar soap  
Aspirin and acetaminophen; band aids; antifungal creams  
Call 525-0226

**Special volunteer needs at shelters  
are listed at [www.srcharities.org](http://www.srcharities.org)**



**YOU CAN BECOME A CATHOLIC CHARITIES AMBASSADOR!  
BRING A FRIEND, ATTEND OUR SECOND ANNUAL  
HOPE WORKS WONDERS BREAKFAST, AND EXPERIENCE THE  
MEANING OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES. THERE IS NO COST TO  
ATTEND BUT RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED.  
WEDS, NOVEMBER 4 IN SANTA ROSA  
7:30 – 8:30 AM  
PLEASE CALL REBECCA, 528-8712 EXT. 158  
FOR AN INVITATION.**

