

'Age wave' housing, education senior service priorities

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3B

All on board

Twelve individuals bring a variety of experience and expertise to Catholic Senior Services as board members.

They are:

- Antonio Bernardi
- Elizabeth Buckley
- Amy R. Goldman
- Andrew J. Herring
- Al Hofstede
- Richard A. Klein
- Diane Liemandt-Reimann
- Steve Nielsen
- Bishop Richard Pates
- Ronald H. Reimann, Sr.
- Michael Scherer
- Robert J. Strachota

To read more about the board members, visit www.THECATHOLICSPIRIT.COM.

in service and care and to fill those gaps, said Barbara Rode, president and CEO of St. Therese of New Hope.

Through its parishes and institutions, the archdiocese has a network for connecting people to needed services. Parishes have volunteer networks and property available for building senior housing.

It also has the spiritual resources to help people as they age and prepare for death.

"The elderly, themselves, often develop an even deeper spiritual hunger," Bishop Pates said. Senior housing with connections to parish life and ordained clergy and other ministers will help meet those needs, he said.

The four affiliates have the same vision for the services, said St. Therese Southwest CEO Mike Pagh.

"As we link arms with the archdiocese, we have an opportunity to create an exciting continuum of a Catholic response to senior housing that can meet not only the care needs, but the spiritual needs," he said.

Forging into the future

The new Catholic agency plans to work closely with parishes to bring about more housing, Gannon said. Where possible, it seeks to build housing on parish property or close enough to parishes so that seniors can still be an active part of parish life.

By 2030, at least one-fourth of parishioners will be beyond retirement age, and parishes are looking for ways to keep them connected to the parish, even if they choose to move into a senior care residence.

Less than 10 years ago, only seven or eight parishes were interested in building senior residences on or near their parish. Today, about 25 parishes have inquired about the possibility, Broderick said.

By living near a parish, elders' spiritual and social needs can be met more easily, and it allows them to

"We want to make this a community and parish-based model."

DAN GANNON
Catholic Senior Services CEO

still contribute to parish life, Gannon said.

"The elderly have gifts to give — they have a lot of wisdom and experience in the serenity of their older age to offer to the younger generation," he said. "We don't want to send our elderly fathers and mothers somewhere far away. We want to make this a community and parish-based model."

Creating affordable housing is an important component. While one-third of baby boomers are adequately prepared financially for their retirement years, one-third will require some assistance, while the other third are unprepared, Broderick said.

The greatest challenge will be creating awareness about the age wave, Gannon said. It's also Catholic Senior Services' greatest asset, he said.

"Everyone has parents and grandparents that need care," he said.

Growing old, staying young

Age and the behavior to which it corresponds is changing, Bishop Pates said. The baby boom generation may be aging, but it is acting younger.

"The aging process has jumped 10 or 20 years, I think," he said. "What used to be 60 is now 70, what used to be 70 is now 80."

That means seniors are healthier, living in their homes longer, and entering independent or assisted living at later dates.

When St. Therese opened a new independent living facility called

Oxbow Lake in Brooklyn Park, they expected their new residents to be mostly in their 70s. Instead, they're mostly in their 80s.

While longevity is a contributing factor, Rode said, people may also stay in their homes longer because they are unaware of the benefits of living on a Catholic senior living campus, where they have access to social activities and daily Mass.

Catholic Senior Services is available to serve the whole community, not just Catholics, although about 70 percent of residents of Catholic senior care facilities are Catholic, Broderick said.

Cooperation to serve

As part of Catholic Senior Services, affiliated organizations will be better equipped to raise funds, Broderick said. They will be able to market their outreach regionally, not just locally, she said.

In organizing Catholic Social Services, the archdiocese looked to the model of Presbyterian Homes of Minnesota, which provides housing and care services while keeping its residents connected to the Presbyterian community. It also sought insight from the Diocese of Richmond, Va., and Archdiocese of St. Louis, Mo., which are organizing senior care services.

There will be the challenges of any start-up organization, Bishop Pates said, including fundraising. Catholic Senior Services is raising \$1 million for start-up costs.

So far, the initiative has received a lot of support from parishes and other organizations, he said.

"It's really a part of our Catholic identity and who we are as Christians that we undertake this project now," he said.

To learn more about Catholic Senior Services, visit the Web site at www.CATHOLICSENIORSERVICES.ORG.

In the spirit of the sisters

Have great Catholic health care? Thank a sister.

Even though lay people have moved into the roles vacated by religious women as their numbers declined and ministries changed, the present quality

of care is rooted

in the

commitment

of several

religious

communities

that have

served the

archdiocese.

"The sisters

have cared for

the vulnerable and

the ill, many of whom

have been elders,

right from the very start

of the state of

Minnesota, practically,"

said Mary Broderick, the

CEO of Catholic

Eldercare.

In 1851, the Sisters of St.

Joseph of Carondelet came to

St. Paul and opened a school.

When a cholera epidemic struck

two years later, they transformed

their school into Minnesota's first

hospital, which eventually

became St. Joseph's Hospital.

In 1886, the Daughters of the

Immaculate Heart of Mary

opened a school for the hearing

impaired.

In 1889, the Little Sisters of the

Poor started care for the poor

and elderly.

Other communities, including

the Sisters of Mercy, Benedictines,

Dominicans and Franciscans,

have established and cared for

the ill and aged in Twin Cities

health care facilities.

"[Under] the tremendous

challenges of the burgeoning

health care needs . . . they had

to turn into entrepreneurs,

business people," Broderick said.

The sisters' service is integrated

into the Twin Cities' health care,

she said. Catholic Eldercare was

founded in 1979 with the help of

Sinsinawa, Wis., Dominican Sisters

of the Congregation of the Most

Holy Rosary.

"In each of the affiliated

organizations [of Catholic Senior

Services], the spirit of the sisters is

there because they were there in

the founding and setting the

philosophy for how the people

are to be cared for," Broderick

said.

This philosophy included holistic

care for the person and attention

to their spiritual needs.

Broderick is inspired when she

considers the dedication of the

sisters, especially under

pioneering and wartime

conditions, she said.

"It's also been very inspirational

to think of people who gave their

whole life in the service of others

according to the Gospel," she

said.

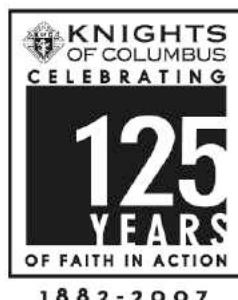
— Maria Wiering

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