



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS



For Immediate Release

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Bishop Hurley Announces Staff Appointment

Grand Rapids, Mich, February 2, 2007 – Most Reverend Walter A. Hurley, bishop of Grand Rapids, announced today the appointment of Ms. Deborah J. McCormack as president/chief executive officer of Catholic Charities West Michigan (CCWM) for the Diocese of Grand Rapids effective March 13, 2007. Ms. McCormack currently serves as president/chief executive officer of Catholic Charities of Shiawassee and Genesee Counties.

The president/chief executive officer of Catholic Charities West Michigan (CCWM) is a new position created in light of the findings and recommendations of the Governance Organizational Review of the Secretariat for Social Justice (SSJ) conducted by LEAD, Inc. and submitted to Bishop Hurley in May 2006. Catholic Charities West Michigan will absorb the majority of the components that were previously the responsibility of the Secretariat for Social Justice while others are being integrated into the diocesan Pastoral Services Division.

As president/chief executive officer, Ms. McCormack will have overall responsibility for the direction of vital social services that are provided to people in the diocesan area, regardless of their religious, social or economic background.

“Ms. McCormack brings valuable administrative experience to the position as well as a working understanding of Catholic social teaching. Her background is in Catholic agency and hospital settings which provide a variety of direct service programs to those in need,” said Bishop Hurley.

Catholic Social Services Grand Rapids and Catholic Social Services Muskegon are agencies within the CCWM and are the direct service providers for the diocese. Mr. Richard V. Liberatore is executive director of Catholic Social Services Grand Rapids and Mr. Robert H. Mills serves as executive director of Catholic Social Services Muskegon. Of the 23,000 persons and families being served by the two social service agencies this year, 80% are at or below the Federal poverty

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guidelines, 30% registered as Catholic and 70% declared other faith traditions. The agency meal programs - God's Kitchen in Grand Rapids and Community Kettle in Muskegon - have served 230,000 meals this year. The Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry in Muskegon served 8,400 families.

"I am grateful to Bishop Hurley for the appointment and the opportunity to work with him, the people of West Michigan, the parishes and diocesan agencies," said Ms. McCormack. "I look forward to working together to identify ways we can be even more effective in our response to the needs of our community."

Ms. McCormack received a Bachelor of Arts, Social Work, from Michigan State University and a Master of Social Work from Wayne State University, and is presently enrolled in a doctoral program at Michigan State University. She has managed a budget of several million dollars, a capital campaign, and fund raising activities along with serving on civic boards and participating in various community collaboratives.

The Diocese of Grand Rapids serves 170,000 Catholics in 102 parishes and missions in an 11-county area.

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