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## 2009 Results



The vision was to raise funds to support the numerous programs under the umbrella of Lafayette Catholic Services Centers. The aim was to make that fundraising more efficient so more of the money actually went directly to those in need. The result of this year's Diocese of Lafayette Opus Christi Magnum fundraising campaign is a check presented to LCSC on Monday for \$400,000, just in time to lift Christmas spirits and to aid in planning for 2010.

The campaign returned 91 cents on the dollar to the programs, according to Tyron Picard, who chaired the drive with Monsignor Keith DeRouen. "In my experience, that (percentage) is unparalleled," Picard said. "Stewardship and responsibility were paramount to us."

The annual Bishop's Charity Gala has been replaced by eight, smaller events, each hosted by captains who invite their family and friends to a spiritual presentation by Bishop Michael Jarrell, followed by a reception. "Our primary driver in this was that the cost of producing the gala had become prohibitive," Picard said. "And, with the proliferation of galas in our area, it had become more and more difficult to sustain." Instead of larger events, the diocese went with smaller, more intimate settings, and produced them at less than \$5,000 per event. DeRouen noted the increasing problems facing the gala. "We would sell 100 tables, and prepare food for 1,000 people," he said, "and 400 would show up. Well, we had their contributions, but we had to throw food away. One of our goals is to feed the poor, and here we were throwing food away." The new format makes better use of both resources and donations.

"Our goal was to become better stewards of the donations," said Ed Hebert of Chase Bank, incoming chair of the campaign. "And, we wanted to be more inclusive. We wanted to see more participation. "It's such a worthwhile cause, and has been a very successful fundraising strategy."

"My experience in fundraising goes way back, to the Bishop's Charity Ball," said Sen. Mike Michot. "As we've continued on, the need to help does not go away. In fact, the need increases. It's important to build on a foundation. We've got some ideas on how to reach out to those who have not been informed in the past."

Opus Christi Magnum translates to "The great work of Christ." "People have gotten behind the appeals and have really responded," Bishop Jarrell said. "We're very thankful to the events captains, and to the community leaders who are advocates for the poor," said LCSC Director Kim Boudreaux, who is able to multiply the benefits from the campaign through federal grants.

"It's been a great success, particularly in these economic times," DeRouen said.