



# ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

## Office of Communications and Planning

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Catholic Charities Honored with Community Leadership Award

*FOCUS St. Louis Presents “What’s Right with The Region” Awards Thursday*

**ST. LOUIS** – Catholic Charities of St. Louis will be among 20 organizations and individuals honored by FOCUS St. Louis, “the region’s premier leadership organization,” on Thursday night. Catholic Charities will be recognized as “Flood Disaster Response Collaboration” along with seven other lead organizations including the Society of St. Vincent de Paul for their collective efforts in response to the December 2015 flooding.

According to FOCUS St. Louis, “The honorees were nominated by the public and selected by a panel of community judges for their impact and service to the community.” The awards reception begins at 5:00 p.m. Thursday, May 12, at the Sheldon Concert Hall.

“Each year Catholic Charities assists approximately 150,000 people right here in the St. Louis region,” said President Theresa Ruzicka. “In the unique case of the flood in late 2015, the depth of our programs and services and the unique skills of professionals within our federation were able to help victims with long-term recovery.”

Each organization took the lead on a certain aspect of flood relief, with Catholic Charities and St. Francis Community Services focusing on case management through housing relocation. These collaborating agencies set up seven Multi-Agency Resource Centers (MARC)s as one-stop shop locations around the region designed to bring together service providers in a single location and provide on-site assistance to disaster survivors.

“It was inspiring to witness service providers working with a family and then walking with them over to another service provider to see what additional assistance was available,” Ruzicka added. “This award shows that partnership is an important part of disaster recovery and that the St. Louis is a region of people who care and work to help each other. It is a testament to how we came together in time of need!”

In addition to Catholic Charities, Dr. Jason Purnell, member of the Peace & Justice Commission of the Archdiocese of St. Louis and Washington University professor, will receive the prestigious FOCUS St. Louis Leadership Award for his work on the *For the Sake of All* project. Dr. Purnell has presented his work on the project to parishes and agencies throughout the Archdiocese.

**#CatholicSTL**