

## Love Never Fails...

**1 Corinthians 13:8**

**D**embe was keeping a very dangerous secret.

For months she had been visiting a Catholic shrine near her home in Uganda. Pregnant, she nurtured her new-found faith there and decided she would have her baby baptized. But Dembe came from a devout Muslim family and she knew her change of religion could be disastrous.

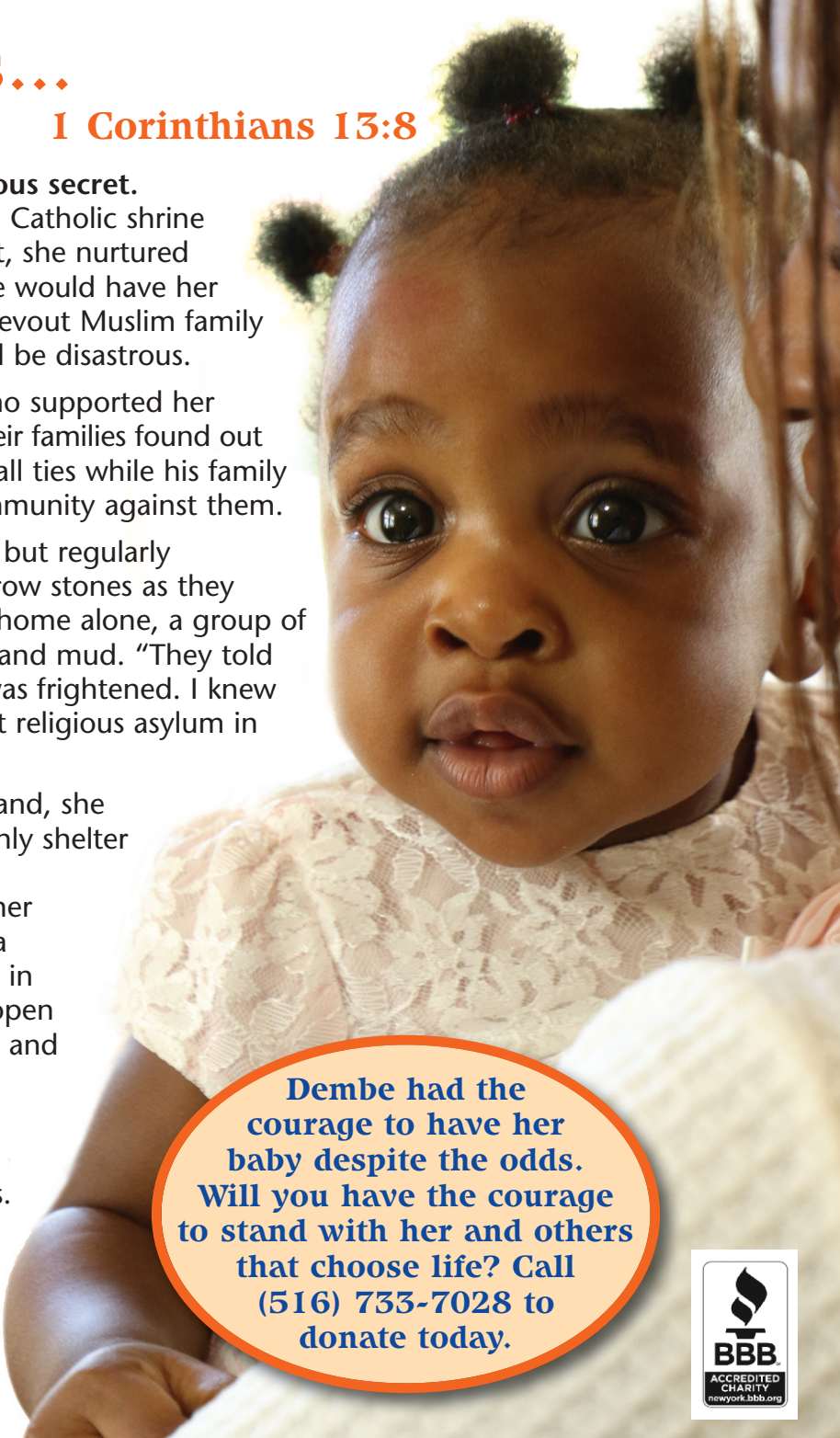
She eventually told her husband who supported her decision. However, it wasn't long before their families found out and tempers flared. Hers immediately cut all ties while his family quickly turned everyone in their small community against them.

Soon they were not only ostracized but regularly victimized. Neighbors would curse and throw stones as they walked in the street. Once, while she was home alone, a group of men threw her into a pile of animal dung and mud. "They told me they'd kill us if I baptized my baby. I was frightened. I knew I had to do something." So Dembe sought religious asylum in the United States.

When she arrived without her husband, she was still eight months pregnant and the only shelter she could find was in a friend's unfinished basement. A hospital social worker heard her plight and called Catholic Charities' Regina Residence, our home for pregnant women in crisis. There, Dembe was welcomed with open arms and found unconditional love for her and her newborn baby, Maria.

Today, Dembe and her baby are healthy, happy, and enjoying the religious freedom and tolerance of the United States. But she recalls, "At that shrine they told me that God would find a way to wrap His arms around us. It was true. His arms are the embrace of Catholic Charities."

*Dembe and baby Maria  
at Regina Residence.*



**Dembe had the  
courage to have her  
baby despite the odds.  
Will you have the courage  
to stand with her and others  
that choose life? Call  
(516) 733-7028 to  
donate today.**



# SNAPSHOTS From the Heart



**Who is that jolly old elf?** Let's just say we know our Board of Trustees are committed when they dress as Santa Claus for our annual Christmas Party for the Developmentally Disabled! LOVE is what drives us at Catholic Charities of Long Island, from top to bottom!

**Meet Dolores, a volunteer at Catholic Charities since 2014...** Always ready to roll up her sleeves no matter the project, she has become a shining example



**You might think we're exaggerating when we say the team at Catholic Charities are some of the most genuinely loving people you'll ever know, but we're not.** Meet our very own Linda Reich who became a living kidney donor for a complete stranger. We're proud to call her one of our own. Rest assured that people like Linda help bring your love to a world that desperately needs it because: Our Love Knows No Bounds.



of the Catholic Charities spirit, manning the front desk of our administration center with aplomb and grace. The spunky "captain" of this ship is quick-thinking and gregarious and welcomes each phone call and the numerous visitors to our doors with sincere kindness. She even helps new volunteers who are still a bit "green!" How could we

**In January, Bishop John Barres "spent the day the**

**Charities way."** He visited a number of our more than 60 sites in both Nassau and Suffolk counties, meeting with moms and their children at Regina Residence, seniors at St. Agnes Village, and residents at Virdone, one of our homes for the developmentally disabled. We are grateful for a shepherd who loves his flock!



know that the petite lady who strolled through our doors five years ago would become our inspiration?



## Federally Funded Senior Apartments Are Now Available!

**You need a little help... but you know a nursing home is not for you. Mary's Manor Enriched Housing can help.**

**State-of-the art apartments in the Five Towns area are now available for low-income seniors who need some assistance with their daily activities. These beautiful one-bedroom and studio apartments offer:**

- Two nutritious meals served daily
- Personal care aides
- Showers and tubs with fold-down seats and grab bars
- Recreational activities
- A safe environment with 24-hour supervision

The apartments are open **exclusively** to seniors, 65 or older whose income is less than \$1,485 per month. **Call today and find out if Mary's Manor is right for you.**

**(516) 371-1376**



**CATHOLIC CHARITIES**  
DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

Funded by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and sponsored by Catholic Charities of Rockville Centre

Care with Dignity...Life With Hope



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES



We turn cars into **CARE**

### Get a Few More Miles Out of Ol' Faithful

Donating your unused car, truck, motorcycle or even boat can do a world of good for vulnerable neighbors here on Long Island. It helps us:

- deliver Meals-On-Wheels to homebound seniors
- house returning veterans suffering from mental illness
- battle addiction with our 24-hour stabilization center... to name just a few.

Call **(877) 507-GIVE (4483)** or visit **[www.catholiccharities.cc](http://www.catholiccharities.cc)** and click on **Cars to Care** on the right.

We'll schedule a convenient pickup and provide tax confirmation of your donation.



**Meet the hands that do the work of your caring heart.**

Victoria manages Christopher Residence, one of our 13 homes for the developmentally disabled on Long Island where she's been a prized part of our team for more than 21 years. Our residents choose which home to live in and many choose to spend their lives at Christopher Residence, some having been there together for more than 25 years! Ask them or their families just what makes it such a special place and the answer is always the same: Victoria. But she modestly declines the praise, explaining, "I don't have a special formula, I just know that everyone wants to be part of a family. So I make sure Christopher Residence acts united as a family. That means we all get to share our decisions, our hopes, and our dreams—even me. And most important, we all listen and talk about it. We have to be invested in one another to grow as a family."

**Your support and prayers make families like Christopher Residence possible!**

## Shout Back!

Dear Friend,

**I**f you're like many New Yorkers, you felt like you just got punched in the gut when our newly-elected state leaders gleefully passed the dishonestly named Reproductive Health Act.

Let's call this what it really is: a brazenly dangerous expansion of late-term abortion. New York now allows abortions right up to the moment of birth and even permits non-physicians to perform the procedures! So if mom or child was in mortal danger, non-doctors could be making life and death calls. They even changed the penal code. Now, if someone were to batter a pregnant woman and cause a miscarriage, the baby's death will no longer be a punishable crime!

Then they illuminated the Freedom Tower and the Alfred E. Smith Building in Albany in pink to celebrate this insult to common sense and decency.

***Abortion, once considered an avenue of last resort, has now become a badge of pride.***

Online, the #ShoutYourAbortion movement encourages women to boldly proclaim their stories. You can watch painful videos of women angrily shouting the gruesome details of their abortions to crowds of onlookers. There are also thousands of written posts, all defiantly shouting variations of, "YES! I aborted my child!" Meanwhile, the governor of Virginia described with chilling detachment how babies born after failed abortions could be kept "comfortable" while allowed to die. Most sensible people consider this infanticide.

***So how did we get to such an ugly place?***

Nobody can answer that but I do know that together, we can turn it around.

Since 1967 our Regina Maternity Services has been there for thousands of young women facing crisis pregnancy alone. They come to us because we unconditionally support their decision to keep their babies. We provide housing, counseling, education, and even job training then send them into the world as confident, working mothers. And for those moms struggling to free their families from poverty, our Women, Infant and Children (WIC) program provides food, education, and health screenings.

We believe that all life should be welcomed, even when it comes along inconveniently. We don't wring our hands or pass judgement; we just build families by loving them. So I ask you plainly:

**Will you use the enclosed envelope to stand with us?**

**The young women and babies of Catholic Charities would be forever grateful. And so would I.**

Sincerely yours,

Laura A. Cassell  
CEO, Catholic Charities  
Diocese of Rockville Centre



# Responding...

The compassionate but anonymous couple who again contributed \$250,000, bringing their total gifts to our ministries to more than \$1.75 million. Their generosity inspires us!

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for awarding us \$150,000 to expand 35 apartments to 39 in Project Independence, our effort to house homeless individuals and families struggling with mental illness.

Our newest partner, the Gladys Brooks Foundation for their \$50,000 purchase of two vans to transport residents at Talbot House, our medically-monitored stabilization center for those battling addiction.

Our long-time partner in care, Newsday Charities, a McCormick Foundation Fund for a \$40,000 grant to bolster our Housing & Supportive Services.

The United Way Community Partnership for their \$26,000 grant and for always being there for our neediest neighbors.

The Walmart Foundation for a \$25,000 grant to our Nutrition Outreach Project. Since 2014 they've donated nearly \$120,000 to help us eradicate hunger on Long Island!

Our special thanks to these friends for helping us provide  
*Care With Dignity...Life With Hope.*

Another charitable couple who wish to remain anonymous for their gift of \$10,000, which brings their total gift-giving to an incredible \$90,000!

A very generous Mr. & Mrs. Edward FitzGerald for their gift of \$10,000.

A guardian angel, Lillian McConville whose estate left us \$9,579.30.

The Maternity & Early Childhood Education Foundation for their \$8,241 mentoring grant for Regina Maternity Services.

Mr. & Mrs. Mark Anderson for \$5,000 to help young mothers and their children at Regina Maternity Services.

Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Brady whose recent \$5,000 contribution brings their overall support to a most amazing \$111,550.

Our always faithful friends at The Gary J. & Susan O. Ferrentino Foundation whose \$5,000 grant brings their direct support of our work to \$132,000.



Ocean Financial, The Catholic Credit Union and their many customers for their "Christmas Stocking" fundraiser.

The selfless nurses at St. Francis Hospital, The Heart Center and Catholic Health Services for collecting baskets of household items for returning vets in our Project Veterans Independence.

Veterans were also the grateful recipients of goods collected by our newest partner, The Law Firm of Harris Beach PLLC.

## Around and About



A special lunch, cake, and nonstop dancing were on tap as our Wantagh Senior Community Center celebrated the 100th birthday of long-time participant, Caroline Dodge.

Kudos to our eight-year volunteer, Renee Klein, on being named the Lynbrook/East Rockaway "Person of the Year."

Our best wishes on the retirement of Kathy Brown, our Director of Chemical Dependence Services who tirelessly served the clients of Catholic Charities for more than 31 years.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" Isaiah 6:8



Bittersweet news...We bid farewell and congratulations to the Most Reverend Robert J. Brennan who was recently appointed Bishop of Columbus, Ohio by Pope Francis.



### Memorial Cards Now Available

A gift to Catholic Charities in memory of your deceased loved one will change lives forever right here on Long Island. Call (516)-733-7028 to order memorial cards.

The Mission  
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[www.catholiccharities.cc](http://www.catholiccharities.cc)

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