

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
April 30, 2009

**Catholic Charities in Oregon Celebrates Groundbreaking of
Clark Family Center at SE 28th Ave. and Powell Blvd.**

*60,000 square foot campus cornerstone will consolidate programs to better
serve more than 25,000 annually*

Portland, Ore. – A ceremonial shovel-digging ceremony on Thursday, April 30 signaled the long-anticipated construction start of Catholic Charities’ Clark Family Center, a 60,000 square foot 4-story complex located at SE 28th Ave. and Powell Blvd. in Portland. The \$12.5 million building – funded in large part through foundation, corporate and individual donations, as well as New Markets Tax Credits – will be the cornerstone of the organization’s campus and will house operations for nearly all of its programs and services. Completion is scheduled for Spring 2010.

The project designer for Clark Family Center is Lundin Cole Architects, and the general contractor is R&H Construction. To view a rendering of Clark Family Center, go to the Catholic Charities press kit at this link:

http://www.catholiccharitiesoregon.org/press_room.asp.

Mary Clark, capital campaign honorary chair, Chris Folkestad, executive director of the Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund, and Joe Weston, a local developer and long time supporter of Catholic Charities, were among the first to put shovels to dirt at the event. Other ceremonial diggers included Archbishop John Vlazny, Archdiocese of Portland, Dennis Keenan, executive director of Catholic Charities, Mark Ganz, CEO of Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield and capital campaign chair, and Kim Randles who served as Catholic Charities’ capital campaign director and is now the organization’s chief development officer.

“With roots dating back to the Great Depression, Catholic Charities has for years been diligently working to help our community’s poorest citizens regain self-sufficiency, and their dignity,” said Clark. “This beautiful new building will boost Catholic Charities’ ability to help others.”

Catholic Charities currently operates from eight buildings in Portland and Gresham, including office space owned and leased by the organization. The first record of Catholic Charities service statistics, from 1952, shows Catholic Charities as having served 1,323 individuals; today, the number of people served annually exceeds 25,000.

“There is no question that Catholic Charities has outgrown its current supply of office space, particularly in relation to the number of people we serve,” said Keenan. “Clark Family Center will provide us with one roof under which to more comprehensively serve our clients. It will also afford us with a comparative annual cost savings of more than \$215,000 on lease payments, energy consumption and maintenance alone, allowing us to put that savings directly toward our services.”

Donors, parishioners and other friends of Catholic Charities are most familiar with the organization’s Pregnancy Support and Adoption Services, as well as the Elizabeth House maternity home and Haven House transitional housing facility for young single mothers. The organization’s largest programs, however, are Caritas Housing, the affordable housing arm of the organization, as well as El Programa Hispano, which provides a comprehensive array of services to low-income Latinos in the Portland metropolitan area. Among the other services offered by Catholic Charities are outreach and assistance to victims of domestic violence (which includes operation of Oregon’s first and only Spanish language 24/7 domestic violence hotline), outreach and assistance to victims of human trafficking, immigration legal services, refugee resettlement, ministry to the elderly, gang intervention, counseling and mentoring services, and school retention and youth support programs.

About Catholic Charities

Since 1933, Catholic Charities in Oregon has been bringing hope, resources and advocacy to the poorest and most vulnerable throughout the state, regardless of faith, race, marital status or condition in life. The organization serves as the professional social service arm of the Archdiocese of Portland, yet is funded completely through grants and donations. Headquartered in Portland at 231 SE 12th Avenue, the organization will move into its new Clark Family Center upon completion in Spring 2010. For more information call (503) 231-4866, or go to www.catholiccharitiesoregon.org.

###

Media contacts:

Sherri Phillips, Catholic Charities
(503) 231-4866x113 / sPhillips@catholiccharitiesoregon.org

Kelliann Amico, Amico Public Relations (for Catholic Charities)
(503) 224-5486 / kelliann@amicopr.com