

## Charities thanks donors, honors young artists

During its annual donor appreciation luncheon Nov. 28 at a hotel in downtown Portland, Catholic Charities announced the winners of its 2012 Christmas card contest.

First-place went to Emma Smith, 9, a fourth-grader at Holy Cross School. Her card depicts the nativity and was chosen out of 2,050 entries. Thousands of cards will be sent out by the Archdiocese of Portland's social service organization during the holidays with Emma's design.

Second-place winner was Julie Nguyen, 10, a fifth-grader at Valley Catholic School in Beaverton. There was a tie for third — Athena VanDyke, 9, a fourth-grader at Visitation School in Forest Grove, and Savannah Fitts, 9, fourth-grader at St. Matthew School in Hillsboro.

During the luncheon, Catholic Charities Executive Director Pietro Ferrari congratulated everyone in the room for their efforts in advocating for the poor and most vulnerable.

"You have helped them liberate from their own plight with compassion and that Christian love that is so much



*Catholic Sentinel* photo by Clarice Keating

**Archbishop John G. Vlazny congratulates artists Athena VanDyke, Savannah Fitts, Julie Nguyen and Emma Smith.**

a part of our identity," he said to the room full of attendees, adding that they help people "transform from victims to victors."

Brendon Robar, a case manager for the refugee re-settlement program told the

story of an Iraqi man, Samer Ibrahim, who arrived in Portland three months ago. The man fled Iraq due to war, but also because of lack of medical care. Ibrahim suffers from hemophilia, and untreated bleeding in his knees

has caused serious crippling of his joints. But, thanks to help from Catholic Charities, he will soon undergo knee replacement surgery.

Catholic Charities Oregon serves approximately 20,000 people per year.