

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Esperanza Court Opens, Offers Affordable
Housing Option to Families**

*Catholic Charities' ambitious redevelopment
continues at SE 28th & Powell*

Portland, Ore. – **October 17, 2008** – Esperanza Court, the largest affordable housing property to be built by Catholic Charities' Caritas Housing program, opened its doors to the public today in a dedication ceremony that included Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish, The Regence Group CEO Mark Ganz, Bureau of Housing & Community Development Director Will White, Oregon Housing Community Services Representative Roz Barnes, and Archdiocese of Portland Archbishop John Vlazny. More than 100 community leaders and Catholic Charities supporters attended the ceremony at Esperanza Court, located at 3611 SE 28th Avenue.

"As we prepare for impacts from the current economic downturn, we need to ensure our most vulnerable citizens are protected," said Portland Commissioner Nick Fish, "Today we are celebrating the latest addition to our safety net for the homeless, and for people at risk of homelessness."

Esperanza Court offers 70 units of affordable rental housing to individuals and families, including 14 units of housing specifically for families in crisis. Ranging in rents from \$550 to \$600, the complex includes 28 one-bedroom units and 42 two-bedroom units. Prospective residents may call (503) 231-4866 for more information.

"In Spanish, the word 'esperanza' means hope, and that's exactly what the Esperanza Court housing development will provide to about 70 families from all walks of life in our community," said Mark Ganz, Catholic Charities board member and CEO of The Regence

Group. "For these families, Esperanza Court is a fresh start and an opportunity to move from homelessness or transitional housing into safe, stable and affordable homes.

"Esperanza Court is the final multi-family housing development to open on Catholic Charities' new central campus, preceded by Kateri Park and Howard House," continued Ganz. "Having all of our buildings and services consolidated on one campus will not only help Catholic Charities be more efficient, but it will allow us to better serve all members of the community."

Amenities of the four story, L-shaped Esperanza Court include dishwashers in all units, laundry rooms on floors two through four, garbage and recycling areas on each floor, an on site manager's office, a small library with a computer area, a community room for meetings and small groups, and a small fitness room. The central community amenity will be the interior courtyard area, which will have a sports court for older children, a toddler play area with soft play surfaces for smaller children, and other spaces for relaxation and communing with neighbors. Social and support services will also be available to all residents. Located in Portland's close-in Creston-Kenilworth neighborhood, Esperanza Court is close to commercial and retail amenities, mass transit, schools, parks and social services.

"Esperanza Court is a safe and diverse community for people working hard to enhance their families' quality of life and economic well-being," said Terri Silvis, director of housing for Catholic Charities' Caritas Housing program. "We are proud to give its residents a comfortable home environment in which to prosper."

Esperanza Court is in alignment with the Catholic Charities USA initiative to reduce poverty in America by half by 2020. It also addresses several of the Governor's Principles for a Prosperous Oregon, including education, health, livability and safety initiatives.

"Every human being deserves a safe, decent and affordable place to live in and call home," said Dennis Keenan, executive director of Catholic Charities. "We are deeply grateful for the community partnerships that have made Esperanza Court a reality that holds the promise of living up to its name, namely hope."

