



For Immediate Release

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## **Catholic Charities Receives Half Million Dollar Donation from Empire City Casino to Provide Assistance to New Yorkers Devastated by Storm** ***Urges Participation in Casino's Annual Toy & Coat Drive to Benefit Families in Need***

**December 5, 2012, New York** – Catholic Charities received an early Christmas gift that will help them continue to provide vital services to New York families devastated by Hurricane Sandy. **Timothy J. Rooney, President and CEO of Empire City Casino**, contacted **Monsignor Kevin Sullivan, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York**, to commend the organization for all they are doing and offer a donation of **\$500,000** to the **Catholic Charities Hurricane Sandy Relief and Recovery Fund** to ensure that more families receive the help they need. The funds will be directed to New Yorkers recovering in all five boroughs, as well as Westchester.

“We are grateful for Empire City Casino's generosity,” stated **Monsignor Kevin Sullivan**. “This donation has enabled Catholic Charities to respond early, but will also help our commitment to assist in meeting long-term needs.”

Since Sandy hit, Catholic Charities has been responding to the needs of those impacted by the hurricane's devastation. In hard-hit neighborhoods, mobile food pantries were deployed, crucial supplies needed by survivors were delivered, and hundreds of volunteers were coordinated to help with clean-up efforts. Working with FEMA, state and city governments, and many other organizations, Catholic Charities' professional and compassionate staff is ensuring that families in need receive access to multiple services, including counseling, housing assistance and rapid repairs.

Rooney said that Empire City also provided direct assistance to residents after the storm. The Casino served as a hub for Con Edison to distribute dry ice and blankets to residents in need, dispatched their culinary team to hard hit coastal areas to feed hot meals to thousands of first responders and residents, and prepared and delivered trays of hot food to area shelters.

Additionally, in an effort to encourage donations to the Empire State Relief Fund (“ESRF”) recently announced by Governor Cuomo, Empire City has established a matching program that will match up to \$100,000 of contributions made to ESRF by employees and customers.

“There are no greater deeds than charity and service,” said **Rooney**. “The devastation New Yorkers suffered from this storm is unspeakable and they need our help,” **Rooney** continued. “Whether you donate \$2 or \$2,000, it will make a difference. No act of kindness or generosity is ever too small.”

Empire City Casino has a long history of working with Catholic Charities to help New Yorkers in need, non-Catholics and Catholics alike. Each year Empire City hosts its **Annual “Christmas Spirit” Toy and Coat Drive**, an event that holds even greater importance this year in the face of the catastrophic Hurricane Sandy.

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So many families were impacted by the hurricane and monies that would typically be spent on gifts are now needed to restore and repair homes and replace essential belongings that were destroyed in the storm. More adults and children than ever are in need of a warm coat to protect them from the cold, and so many families will simply not be able to afford a Christmas gift for their children this year.

Donations of gently used coats and new, unwrapped toys are being collected at Empire City Casino's main promotions booth through December 9<sup>th</sup>. Contributions such as these help Catholic Charities with its mission to rebuild lives and touch almost every human need promptly, locally, day in and day out, always with compassion and dignity.

#### **About Catholic Charities**

Catholic Charities, a federation of approximately 90 agencies and programs located throughout the 10 counties of the Archdiocese of New York, helps solve the problems of New Yorkers in need – non-Catholics and Catholics alike— with services that protect and nurture children, resolve family crises, assist the hungry and homeless, support the physically and emotionally challenged, and integrate immigrants and refugees.

#### **About Empire City Casino**

Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway is a full entertainment destination offering 5,300 slot machines, video roulette, electronic craps, sic bo and baccarat tables, Italian cuisine in Nonno's Trattoria, trackside dining in the Empire Terrace Restaurant which overlooks the track for live harness racing, an International Food Court with a wide-ranging menu, year-round live harness racing five nights a week, live entertainment six days a week, including karaoke, comedy, jazz & blues, and the best party and Latin bands in the tri-state area. The multi-faceted Good Time Room is available for parties, benefits, weddings, and major events for up to 400 guests. Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway is located at 810 Yonkers Avenue (at Central Park Avenue) in Yonkers, New York, Westchester County, (I-87 to Exit 2) and is open seven days a week from 9:00 AM to 4:00 AM. For more information call 914.968.4200 or log onto [www.empirecitycasino.com](http://www.empirecitycasino.com).

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