



For Immediate Release

Contacts: Catholic Charities – Pierette Imbriano 646-794-2477 Pierette.Imbriano@archny.org
Empire City Casino – Taryn Duffy 914-457-2431 TDuffy@empirecitycasino.com;
John Cirillo, 212-972-5335 johnnycigarpr@aol.com

**Catholic Charities Receives Toys & Coats and Half Million Dollar Donation
from Empire City Casino to Provide Assistance to New Yorkers Devastated by Storm
Elected Officials Join Tim Rooney, Sr., Empire City's President and CEO, at Presentation**

December 10, 2012 – Christmas came early for Catholic Charities when they received gifts that will help them not only ensure that New Yorkers in need have a warm coat this winter and a toy or two under the Christmas tree for their children, but will also allow the organization to continue to provide vital services to New York families devastated by Hurricane Sandy. **Timothy J. Rooney, President and CEO of Empire City Casino**, made a generous donation of **\$500,000** to the **Catholic Charities Hurricane Sandy Relief and Recovery Fund** and also presented the organization with hundreds of toys and coats collected through Empire City Casino's Annual "Christmas Spirit" Toy and Coat Drive.

Rooney was joined by **Monsignor Kevin Sullivan**, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York, State Assembly Member **Shelley Mayer**, Yonkers Mayor **Mike Spano**, Westchester Deputy County Executive **Kevin Plunkett**, **Karen Reynolds**, Westchester & Putnam County Supervisor, Catholic Charities Community Services, **Sister Christine Hennessy**, Catholic Charities Community Services, and **Órla Kelleher**, Executive Director, Aisling Irish Community Center.

A sampling of the items collected was on display in Empire City Casino's Entertainment Lounge. Rooney commended the employees of Empire City as well the customers who gave so generously to the annual drive. Jams, a family-owned California-based company, was also thanked for its generous donation of hundreds of new toys for children in New York, as was Yonkers based Smart Move & Storage for generously providing storage for all of the items donated.

"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."

While families may not be entirely shielded from the harsh realities of the current economic climate, or the devastation that Hurricane Sandy had on homes across the region, hundreds of New Yorkers will now be be shielded from the cold this winter with a warm coat. Children, who may have otherwise gone without this coming Christmas, will now wake to a toy or two to call their very own. And New York families in areas hard hit by Sandy will know that they can depend on the continued services of the Catholic Charities community as a result of the generosity of one of Westchester's largest employers.

"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."

"The Empire City Casino Toy and Coat Drive will benefit many of our clients and relieve them of a financial burden this Christmas season," said **Karen Reynolds** of Westchester & Putnam Catholic Charities.

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.

-more-

December 10, 2012

Catholic Charities Receives Catholic Charities Receives Toys & Coats and Half Million Dollar Donation

Contacts: Catholic Charities – Pierette Imbriano 646-794-2477 Pierette.Imbriano@archny.org; Empire City Casino – Taryn Duffy 914-457-2431 TDuffy@empirecitycasino.com; John Cirillo, 212-972-5335 johnnycigarpr@aol.com

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.

In addition to the generous half million dollar donation to Catholic Charities, Rooney was recognized for the matching pledge he made to the **Empire State Relief Fund**. After the creation of the fund was announced by Governor Cuomo, Rooney encouraged donations by pledging to match up to \$100,000 of donations made to the Empire State Relief Fund. Donations can be made at the Redemption Counter at Empire City Casino or online at www.reliefny.org by entering "ECC" in the matching code field to ensure the donation is doubled by Empire City.

"As our state recovers from the devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy, time and time again the generous spirit of New Yorkers is on full display with organizations, businesses, and individuals stepping up to the plate to help those in need," **Governor Cuomo** said. "With this donation, on top of what has already been pledged, Tim Rooney and the employees of Empire City Casino are once again pitching-in in a big way to support our ongoing relief and recovery efforts, and help those hit hard by Hurricane Sandy begin to rebuild their lives."

"I commend our friends at Empire City Casino for their generous contributions to our fellow New Yorkers," said Yonkers **Mayor Mike Spano**. "During this time of Thanksgiving, we should follow Empire City's lead and provide for those individuals suffering the most during these difficult and stressful times. There is no better time than now to lend a helping hand to our family and friends in New York."

"I applaud Tim Rooney and the leadership of Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway for their tremendous generosity and spirit of citizenship towards the Hurricane Sandy rebuilding efforts," said **Assemblywoman Shelley Mayer**. "All of us in Yonkers are joined with our New York City neighbors during this tough time. We share the sentiments of Mr. Rooney that this is a moment for those who can to contribute to aid this critical relief effort."

Photo Attached: (credit Justin Grasso): (l-r) Back Row: Assemblywoman Shelley Mayor, Empire City Casino President & CEO Timothy Rooney, Mayor Mike Spano, Deputy County Executive Kevin Plunkett, Karen Reynolds (holding Ava) & Sister Christine Hennessy of Catholic Charities, (bottom) Molly, Orla Kelleher of Aisling Irish Center (holding Emmitt)

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.