



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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(Photos courtesy of Sean Hamrock attached)

## **600 Families in Need Receive a Little Holiday Cheer**

### **Fourth Annual Toy and Coat Drive Turns Huge Success**

December 22, 2011 -- **Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway's** President **Timothy J. Rooney** teamed up with **Catholic Charities** once again to provide families in need with a bit of warmth and some holiday cheer through the casino's Fourth Annual "Christmas Spirit" Toy and Coat Drive. **Monsignor Kevin Sullivan**, Executive Director of **Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York**, arrived at Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway on Thursday, December 22, 2011, along with **Karen Reynolds**, Westchester & Putnam County Supervisor and **Sister Christine Hennessy** both of **Catholic Charities Community Services**, as well as **Órla Kelleher**, Executive Director of **Aisling Irish Community Center**, to receive the donation from Mr. Rooney and Empire City Casino patrons to benefit families across the region.

During the week of December 11, 2011, Empire City Casino patrons donated new, unwrapped toys and gently used coats. With the help of employees and community members, Empire City Casino's 2011 Toy and Coat Drive was the most successful to date, collecting over 600 toys and coats. A large surprise contribution of children's toys was donated by California-based, Jams, a family-owned promotional merchandising company. The items will be delivered to Catholic Charities where they will be dispersed to families in need.

"It's important that we remember what the Christmas season is truly celebrating. We must always remember to give to those in need. We provide our customers with an opportunity to give back, and I am always astounded by their generosity," said **Mr. Rooney**. "Together we have made a difference to hundreds of families and we hope that our efforts will motivate others to do the same."

"I extend my sincerest thanks to Mr. Timothy Rooney, Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway and all the generous donors who are helping us to provide help and create hope for our neighbors in need this Christmas season," said **Monsignor Kevin Sullivan**. "The burdens many are feeling at this time of year can be overwhelming. Thanks to the commitment of wonderful partners like Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway, more than 600 of our neighbors will have a little lighter load to bear this Christmas. Because need has no season, it is my sincere hope that we may continue to partner with so many of good will in helping those who need our help throughout the year."

"We are most grateful to Empire City Casino for making such a generous donation of toys this Christmas to help out needy families in the community," said **Órla Kelleher**. "Every child and adult deserves to have a happy memory of Christmas despite the financial hardship they are suffering."



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“At Catholic Charities, families often come to us in a time of crisis and it is our case managers who help strengthen that family by providing help and creating hope,” said **Karen Reynolds**. “This donation will help spread that message of hope. What a wonderful gift this is during the Christmas season.”

“Just like Yonkers Raceway, Jams is a family owned company and we know there are lots of families having a tough time right now. We are fortunate enough to work with people like Yonkers Raceway so when we heard they were having a toy drive, we called up our toy people and said, ‘Get a truck ready, Santa is coming a little early this year!’” said **Robert DeLaRosa, VP Sales and Marketing, Jams**.

### **About Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway**

Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway features 5,300 slot machines, video roulette, baccarat and electronic craps tables, dining in Nonno’s Trattoria, trackside in the Empire Terrace Restaurant which overlooks the track for live harness racing, as well as an International Food Court. The multi-faceted Good Time Room is available for parties and special events for up to 500 guests. Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway is located at 810 Yonkers Avenue (at Central Avenue) in Yonkers, New York, Westchester County, (I-87 to Exit 2). Empire City Casino is open seven days a week from 10:00a.m. to 2:00a.m. Sunday through Wednesday, and until 4:00a.m. Thursday through Saturday. For more information call 914.968.4200 or visit [www.empirecitycasino.com](http://www.empirecitycasino.com).

### **About Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York:**

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. For more information visit [www.catholiccharitiesny.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesny.org).

### **About Aisling Irish Community Center:**

Aisling Irish Community Center was established in Yonkers in 1996 and has evolved into a full-fledged social services organization dedicated to serving the local community. The Aisling Irish Community Center endeavors to provide facilities for all Irish immigrants and their families. It strives to present a caring face to all, reaching out not only to physical but also to the emotional, social and spiritual needs of the human person. The center is located at 990 McLean Ave., Yonkers, NY 1070. For more information call 914-237-5121 or visit [www.aislingcenter.org](http://www.aislingcenter.org).

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