



*Catholic Social Services
of Southern Illinois
Diocese of Belleville, Illinois*

The Metro-East Region of Catholic Social Services (CSS) is proud to announce the selection of the 2009 Christian Service Award winners, who are: Mike Kish, *Principal at Immaculate Conception School in Columbia, IL*; Dennis Dengler, *Special Events Coordinator at St. Augustine of Canterbury Parish in Belleville, IL*; and Ruth Lager, *Community Promoter and Eucharistic Minister at St. Francis of Assisi in Aviston, IL*. Each of the winners was nominated for this honor by multiple individuals and each was recognized for their individual accomplishments.

The award recipients will be formally recognized for their accomplishments at a benefit dinner which is schedule to take place **on Friday, May 1, 2009**, at Albert's Banquet Center in Belleville. The Metro-East Region of Catholic Social Services will be sending out invitations to the family members and friends of the award selectees in the near future.

Reservations will be accepted from the public at any time. Anyone interested in attending this gala event should call (618) 394-5900. Dinner Reservations: \$45 per person, or \$400 for a table of ten, or \$320 for a table of eight. No walks-ins permitted.

This is a great opportunity to honor these three outstanding individuals who have done so much for their communities. Each of them superbly qualifies for this award by fulfilling the selection criteria, i.e., their service readily reflects the mission and spirit of Catholic Social Services through their contributions in one or more of the following areas: faith-related service; community service; youth mentoring; advocacy; direct service to those in need; activity in community organizations, volunteerism, and/or fundraising. Following is a brief quote about each of this year's Metro-East recipients:

- ❖ **Mike Kish** is principal of Immaculate Conception School. Even though he's been at the helm of ICS for nearly four decades, he tackles every school day with incredible energy. He exemplifies faith, respect and true caring for all those in his contact. He's built an incredible community at ICS. Because of his guidance, ICS has a large, devoted cadre of willing volunteers who have helped make ICS a thriving, progressive, lively setting. Because of Mike's spirit, ICS students have more opportunities to learn experience and get involved than students elsewhere.

- ❖ **Dennis Dengler** has done volunteer work at St. Augustine's Parish for the last 40 years. He is honest, hard working, sincere, volunteers over and over again. Dennis was bingo manager for about 34, years. That included calling bingo on a regular basis. As manager he made sure there were enough workers to cover all jobs for the evening, purchased supplies for the bingo, planned changes in format and specials, did advertising, paid bills incurred, got startup change from the bank, made bank deposits, kept records of all activities and expenditures, paid taxes quarterly and filed for the annual license application, prepared an annual financial report.

- ❖ **Ruth Lager** has been a lector and extraordinary minister for St. Francis of Assisi Parish. She has assisted with preparing children for First Communion and Confirmation. She is very well known and respected by and has touched the lives of many young children in Aviston. Mrs. Lager worked as a 4th grade teacher for many years at Aviston Elementary. She is well loved by everyone who was lucky enough to have her for a teacher, which is everyone who grew up in Aviston for about a 25 or 30 year span. She formed a special relationship with each student and made each feel special. She continues to stay in touch decades after having been in her class. She is an amazing asset to the Aviston community. In her retirement, she still volunteers at the nursing home and is a blessing to others.

As an agency of the Diocese of Belleville, CSS provides comprehensive Adoption and Pregnancy Care Services; and Foster Care; Individual, Family and School Counseling; Senior Employment Services, Senior Assisted Living Management, operation of the St. John Bosco Children's Center and Referral Services throughout Southern Illinois. Responding to the needs of the people from all faiths and income levels for sixty years, Catholic Social Services serves the people of the 28 southern-most counties of Illinois. Offices are located in Belleville, Carbondale, Mt. Vernon, Mt. Carmel, and Olney.