

# Calling All Catholics!!!

Submitted by Kent Anderson, *Housing Development Director*

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## **VOLUNTEER TEAMS NEEDED TO HELP RENOVATE 150 VACANT PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS IN FEBRUARY 2012 ACROSS ALL ISLANDS**

On January 16, 2012, the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) launched the “**I Have a Dream**” Campaign. Community volunteers will help the HPHA renovate nearly 150 units by the end of February 2012. Based on these efforts, approximately 600 low-income and homeless persons will secure desperately needed housing by the end of March 2012- about half will be children.

The Office for Social Ministry and Affordable Housing has been actively pursuing such projects as opportunities for parishioners to share their gifts and talents in a real and tangible way to increase and preserve low income affordable housing. In August 2011, 6 Catholic parishes mobilized over 100 volunteers to help renovate 15 units in Wahiawa and Waianae. We intend to multiply this effort in February 2012 tenfold!

Over 400 units currently sit vacant due to needed repair and insufficient resources. Many of these units could be quickly returned to our affordable housing inventory utilizing community volunteers. Some common volunteer duties include painting, heavy cleaning, light repair, grounds keeping, and related functions.

Get involved! Please contact Kent Anderson at 808-203-6718 or [kentanderson@rcchawaii.org](mailto:kentanderson@rcchawaii.org) as soon as possible. As a fundamental part of this Catholic parish response, parishes are called to form and/or strengthen their Homeless Housing Committees as directed by Bishop Larry Silva in his 3/2/11 letter to Priests, Deacons, and All the Faithful of the Diocese of Honolulu. Please be part of the solution to homelessness and lack of affordable housing in our state!



*Volunteers putting their faith into action to house the poor... and having a good time!*

**Additional info available at:**

**<http://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/story/16532036/housing-authority-sets-1-month-150-unit-goal>**

## **LIFE ISSUES FORUM – Loving Children Resulting from Rape From the Respect Life Office**

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One-hundred-year-old Minka Disbrow recently began sharing her story in the news of how she was raped at the age of 17 and became pregnant. Despite the violence inflicted upon her, Minka developed a great love for her unborn child and placed her in a loving home a month after birth. A woman in Minka's situation today is perhaps more likely to seek an abortion, given the current legal status and increased acceptability of abortion. Her story provides an opportunity to reflect on the Church's teaching on abortion in cases of rape.

No matter the circumstances under which a child is conceived, he or she always has great value as a unique human person. The good of every newly conceived child is never nullified by the evil act of rape. Ending a pregnancy conceived in rape attempts to erase and correct the injustice of the rapist's horrific assault with another act of violence and injustice. Punishment for rape should be implemented against the guilty party and not the innocent unborn child and his or her mother.

Each human life is made in the image of God as a new male or female with his or her own unique identity. As the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI said, "Each of us is a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary." The Church distinguishes abortion as an intrinsic evil and says that no matter what the circumstances or motive for an abortion, it is always wrong.

Just how many women and children suffer? Two factors contribute to making estimates on the number of abortions after rape difficult to pinpoint. The crime of rape often remains unreported and abortions statistics themselves are not entirely accurate since reporting requirements vary from state to state. Estimates range broadly, but at least thousands of women each year in our nation suffer from the horrific assault of a rapist, and endure a second act of violence that also causes the deaths of thousands of unborn children. The impact on the mother is compounded by the emotional suffering that most often follows an abortion experience, even if many years later.

As this year's Respect Life Program reminds us, Christ came so that all might have life, and have it to the full. Children whose lives are conceived as a result of rape are called to greatness. The happy ending of Minka's story provides such greatness. After searching her whole life for the child she placed for adoption, Minka was recently reunited with her daughter and discovered a loving and talented family she had never known. She now enjoys her relationships with a family that includes grand-children and great grandchildren who might never have existed if she had chosen differently decades ago.

May Minka's example of her great love for her child serve as a model of the love and sacrifice that we are called to offer, and the love and protection that every child in the womb deserves.

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*Mary McClusky is Special Projects Coordinator at the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. To learn more about the bishops' pro-life activities, go to [www.usccb.org/prolife](http://www.usccb.org/prolife)*