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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis CEO Resigns**

Agency to conduct national search for new director

**(MINNEAPOLIS – June 2, 2009)**– Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, the region’s largest social services provider, will be looking for a new CEO. The Most Rev. John C. Nienstedt, Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis, announced today that he has received the resignation of the Rev. John R. Estrem, CEO of Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis. His resignation is effective June 30, 2009. Estrem has directed the agency since 2005.

Catholic Charities is the human services arm of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis but is structured as a separate 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. It operates on an annual budget of \$35 million, serving about 40,000 people without regard to their faith. The CEO of Catholic Charities is appointed by the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

“I am personally saddened by the request of Fr. John Estrem to take a one-year leave of absence from his priestly ministry,” Nienstedt says. “Fr. John has been a highly valued priest in the parishes where he served as well as in his recent role as Archdiocesan Director of Catholic Charities. He has and will continue to have my support in fraternity and in prayer.

“At the same time, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Robert Spinner as interim Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Charities,” Nienstedt says. “Mr. Spinner is a former board chair of the organization and knows its inner workings well. He is highly respected in the Catholic community. I wish to assure him of my confidence and my support.”

Spinner, a retired hospital executive with Abbott Northwestern Hospital and Allina Hospitals and Clinics, served as chair of the Catholic Charities Board of Directors from January 2007 through December 2008. He holds a bachelor's degree in accounting and economics from St. John's University and a master's degree in healthcare administration from the University of Minnesota. He will begin his duties at Catholic Charities on June 8, 2009, allowing for an orderly transition.

Serving as CEO of Catholic Charities was a dream job, Estrem says, adding that he remains committed to the agency's vital work.

"However, my life and career have been on a single path for 30 years," Estrem says. "After great soul searching, I believe it is essential for me to step back and reflect on the next phase of my career and decide how and where I can be of most service."

Prior to his appointment as CEO of Catholic Charities, Estrem was rector of the Cathedral of St. Paul and was pastor of St. Peter's in North St. Paul. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in theology from the St. Paul Seminary and a master's degree in nonprofit management from Notre Dame University. He was ordained in 1986.

Catholic Charities is disappointed to lose Estrem's leadership and is grateful he has added greatly to the strong foundation of Catholic Charities, says Mary W. Frey, chair of Catholic Charities board. "While it's never a good time to lose a leader of the caliber of John Estrem, we are well prepared to manage an orderly transition," Frey said. "We have a strong organization, a dedicated network of partners and a committed group of supporters who generously give of their time and financial resources. The executive committee of the board discussed succession planning for some time. We will conduct a national search and expect to have outstanding candidates."

*Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis annually meets the needs of more than 40,000 people, regardless of faith. The agency's 42 programs provide services ranging from prenatal care to in-home care for the elderly in 12 counties in and around the Twin Cities. Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis is a member of Catholic Charities USA and was honored by the Charities Review Council for meeting the Council's strict accountability standards, demonstrating responsibility, integrity and transparency as a non-profit organization. Further information on that approval can be found at [smartgivers.org](http://smartgivers.org). Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis is fully accredited by the Council on Accreditation. More information on Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis can be found at [www.cctwincities.org](http://www.cctwincities.org).*

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