Knights and Ladies of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem to Be Crowned in Annual Celebration of the Spirit of Catholic Philanthropy

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ORANGE, CALIF., (FEB. 12, 2015) – Catholic Charities of Orange County (CCOC) celebrates its 25th annual Mardi Gras Ball, Feb. 13, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. within the Arboretum building on the Christ Cathedral campus. The black tie fundraiser is the largest Catholic fundraiser of its kind in Orange County, drawing more than 500 distinguished guests. The Most Rev. Kevin W. Vann, Bishop of Orange, will honor the spirit of philanthropy and reflect on the bountiful contributions Catholic Charities has made over its nearly 40 years of service. The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem will be recognized for their dedicated service, stewardship and support over these many years. “The Mardi Gras Ball allows our Diocese to celebrate Catholic Chari-ties as an organization and reflect on their good works throughout Orange County, while raising funds to support their efforts to provide an essential safety net to those in need throughout our community,” said Bishop Vann. The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem is a Roman Catholic order of knighthood under the protection of the Pope. It traces its roots to Duke Godfrey of Bouillon, principal leader of the First Crusade. In 1496, Pope Alexander VI created the office of Grand Master of the Order, and the office was vested in the papacy where it remained until 1949 when this role was transferred to a cardinal. The Pope is sovereign of the Order, and it enjoys the protection of the Holy See and has its legal seat at Vatican City. Central to the global mission of this organization is to support and further the charitable work of the Church locally and around the world. The annual Catholic Charities Mardi Gras event takes place just be-fore the liturgical season of Lent, as does the famous Mardi Gras festival in New Orleans, Brazil and many other places around the world. Mardi Gras is a celebration of surplus. The celebration arrived in North America with the LeMoyne brothers, Iberville and Bienville, in the late 17th century, when King Louis XIV sent them to defend France’s claim on the territory of Louisiana on March 3, 1699. They made camp just south of New Orleans, named the spot Point du Mardi Gras and partook in a spontaneous party that is often referred to as North America’s first Mardi Gras. “We are blessed as a Catholic community to benefit from the dedica-tion and care offered by this benevolent organization. Its members have demonstrated their commitment to caring for the poor and vulnerable within Orange County. Their commitment to the mission of Jesus Christ is truly an inspiration to us all and I am pleased to recognize their contribution to our Diocese,” concluded Bishop Vann.

ABOUT CATHOLIC CHARITIES Catholic Charities of Orange County, Inc. is a non-profit organization that makes available a broad base of services to all Orange County residents regardless of religious, ethnic, racial and social back-grounds. Catholic Charities works with individuals to define, design and implement family-friendly programs that promote economic opportunity, educational achievement, family enrichment, and community health. For more information, please visit the Catholic Charities of Orange County website.

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